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HUNTING

BY

ARCHIBALD ROGERS
W. S. RAINSFORD
FREDERIC IRLAND
BIRGE HARRISON
HARRY C. HALE
FRANK RUSSELL
GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL

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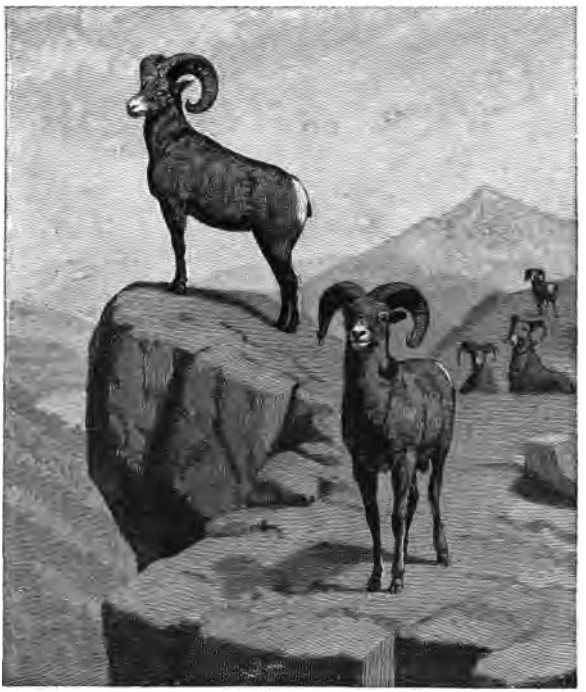
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HUNTING
AMERICAN BIG GAME

By Archibald Rogers



Two fine Rams.

SOME eight or ten years ago* it was by no means difficult for one who knew where to go and how to hunt to get excellent shooting in Northwestern Wyoming. Large game was there moderately abundant, with the exception of buffalo. The latter had just been exterminated; but, bleaching in

* This article was prepared in the latter part of 1891.

the sun, the ghastly evidences of man's sordid and selfish policy lay exposed at every step.

Indian troubles of a very formidable character did a great deal toward keeping the game intact in this portion of the country, by keeping the white man out; and while other parts of Wyoming grew, and towns sprang up with rapid growth, to become in an incredibly short time cities, involving in destruction, as the past sad history shows, the wild animals in their vicinity, this Northwestern portion remained unsettled, and acted as an asylum to receive within its rocky mountain ranges and vast sheltering forests the scattering bands of elk and deer fleeing from annihilation and the encroaching haunts of men. As soon as it was safe, then, and in some instances unquestionably before, cattlemen, not inaptly styled pioneers of civilization, began to drift down along the valley of the Big Horn; and, like the patriarchs of old, "brought their flocks with them," settling here and there, wherever they could find advantageous sites for their ranches.

And now, as I propose to give some hunting experiences of those days, if you will accompany me to Billings, on the

Northern Pacific Railway, the nearest town to my ranch, and the Mecca to which the devout cattleman drives his wagon for supplies, I will introduce you to the foot-hills and mountains, and some of the adventures therein.

After four days on a sleeping-car, it is a delightful release to tumble out on a frosty September morning, and being guided to where the ranch wagon and crew are bivouacked just outside the limits of the rapidly growing town, to get one's breakfast on terra-firma. No time is now to be wasted. The mules are hitched up; the little band of horses are rounded together; and when we have jumped into our saddles, the cook, who always handles the reins, gives a crack of his whip, and we take our departure from civilization. A couple of miles take us to a primitive wire-rope ferry, where we cross the Yellowstone River, which at this season of the year is low and clear; in a few minutes we are over, and, ascending the bluffs on the other side, take our last look at the beautiful valley we are leaving behind.

By night we reach Pryor Creek, where picking out as good a camping-place as possible, the mules are soon unhitched,

and, with the horses, turned loose to graze. While the cook is preparing the evening meal I bag a few prairie chickens, to give variety to the fare. Breakfasting at daylight the next morning, we are soon under way again, with Pryor Mountains in the distance as our goal for this day's journey. Toward evening the white tepees of an Indian camp are visible, clustered in a picturesque group close to Pryor Mountains. Passing them, not without paying a slight tribute in the way of tobacco and such other gifts as our copper-colored friends generally demand, we fairly enter Pryor Gap; and there, in a delightful amphitheatre, we again make camp. This evening we must have trout for supper; so all hands go to work, and we are soon rewarded with a fine mess of trout from the head waters of Pryor Creek.

The next day, as we reach the summit of the Gap, one of the most beautiful views in the country opens out. The great main range of the Rocky Mountains stretches before us, its rugged snow-capped peaks glistening in the morning sun, and we long to be there; but many a long mile still intervenes, and forty-four miles of desert have to be crossed to-day. This is always an arduous undertaking. It is monotonous

in the extreme, and men and animals are sure to suffer for want of good water; for after leaving Sage Creek on the other side of the Gap, there is no water to be had until Stinking Water River * is reached. But all things must have an end; and at last, late in the evening, we find ourselves encamped on the banks of that stream, beautiful despite its unfortunate name.

Fording the river the next morning, not a very terrifying operation in its present low stage, we climb the steep bank, and soon begin our long ascent of the divide that separates us from our ranch and Greybull River. Accompanied by an immense amount of expletives and very bad language, the mules are finally induced to gain the summit. Here even the most casual observer could not fail to be impressed with the magnificent and apparently indefinite expanse of mountain scenery that, turn which way he will, meets his view. However, we have no time to linger; and picking our way among the countless buffalo wallows which indent the level surface of the summit, the wagon,

* Bancroft, in his account of the early explorations of Wyoming, refers to this river as follows: "It is a slander to use this non-descriptive name for an inoffensive stream. The early trappers took it from the Indians, who, in their peculiar fashion, called it 'the river that ran by the stinking water,' referring to bad-smelling hot springs on its banks."

with its wheels double-locked, is soon groaning and creaking down the descent which leads to the merrily rushing Meeteetse, following down which to its junction with Greybull, we are soon inside our own fence, and are joyously welcomed by the dogs. Here, too, I find my trusty friend and companion of all my hunting trips, Tazwell Woody, a grizzled veteran of the mountains, who once long ago claimed Missouri as his home. From the ranch to the mountains is a comparatively short trip, for one day's travel to the westward would place you well up on their slopes.

Let me say of this portion of the range, that it is the most rugged, broken, and precipitous of its whole extent; and the charm of overcoming its apparent inaccessibility can only be appreciated by one who has toiled and sweated in surmounting the difficulties of mountain travel from a pure love of nature in its wildest and grandest form.

Experience having taught me long ago that it was well-nigh impossible to get good specimens of all the different varieties of big game on any one trip, I made up my mind to devote a certain amount of time each year to one variety. By this

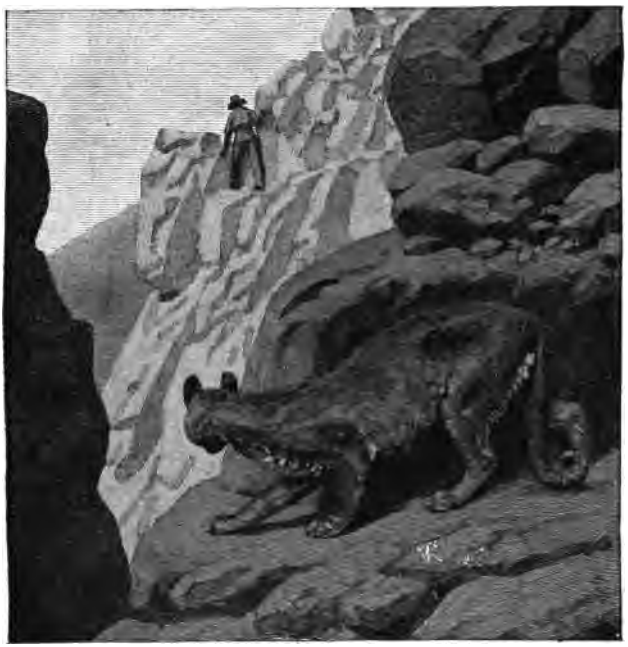
means their habits could be studied more closely, and the main point never lost sight of. In a short paper like this I may best take up the chief of these varieties, one by one, and, without regard to the time of their occurrence, tell something of my experiences with each. And first, as to perhaps the shyest, the Rocky Mountain sheep.

In the pursuit of Rocky Mountain sheep, the hunter, to be successful, must have a fondness for the mountains, a sure foot, good wind, and a head which no height will turn. These requisites, with patience and perseverance, will, sooner or later, as the hunter gains experience, reward him with ample returns. Sometimes, however, the unexpected will happen, and the following tale will serve as an example. We were camping well up in the mountains, and almost any hour of the day sheep could be seen with the glasses. I was after sheep; it was my intent, business, and purpose to get some if possible, and all my energies were concentrated in that direction.

There were two fine rams in particular that we could see about a mile and a half from camp, occupying the slope of a rocky point or promontory that jutted out from

a spur of the range. These two had a commanding position; for while it seemed impossible to get to them from above, they could see every movement from below or on each side of them. However, after studying the country for two days, I found that by ascending the mountain behind them, and coming down again, I could still keep above them, though there was a very narrow ledge of rocks, rather a hazardous place, that had to be crossed to get to the point they were on. This narrow ledge they had to come back on to get to the main part of the mountain; so, stationing my companion there, and taking off my shoes, and putting on an extra pair of heavy stockings, I proceeded to crawl toward the sheep.

With due care, and not making a sound, I made a most successful stalk. Peering over the ledge, I just raised my head enough to be sure my game was still there. They were there, sure enough, within seventy-five yards of me, totally unconscious of danger, when all of a sudden they sprang to their feet, and dashed away from below me as though possessed of a devil. I fired hastily, but of course missed, and, turning, tried to run back to head them off, wondering what had started them, as I knew I



I sneaking after the rams, the panther sneaking after me.

had made no noise. But running over broken rock in one's stocking feet is a very different thing from the slow, deliberate movements that brought me there; and besides, in a few seconds I had the mortification of seeing my would-be victims bounding across the narrow ledge that separated them from the mountain. However, I thought with satisfaction that at least one would meet its death from my companion in hiding; but, alas! although the rams

almost knocked him down, his cartridge missed fire.

Regaining my shoes, which was a great relief, I soon joined my companion, and then discovered the curious adventure I had been made the subject of. It seems that when I had reached a point well down on the promontory I must have disturbed a cougar, which was evidently there for the same purpose I was, and which had stealthily followed me as I proceeded toward the sheep. Old Woody described it as highly amusing — I sneaking down after the rams, and the panther sneaking down upon me. As soon as the beast got an opportunity it turned off, and, making the descent, alarmed the rams, and thus spoiled my hunt.

For several days I watched this point, but those rams never came back to it again. However, not long after this I was amply rewarded, and secured a fine specimen. From one of the high ledges I was looking down into a sort of amphitheatre shut in by massive rocky heights. In this secluded retreat a little band of ewes, with one grand old patriarch as their master, could be seen every day disporting themselves with many a curious gambol. After many unsuccessful attempts I was enabled



Tearing open a fallen tree.

to get a shot; and great was my delight to deprive this little band of their supercilious protector. Upon another occasion I was camping away back up in the mountains, where there were about eighteen inches of snow on the ground. The weather had been villanous; there was no meat in the camp, and I determined to see if I could not get a deer. The prospect was not very cheering; for shortly after starting a heavy fog shut down, hiding all objects from view. I had not proceeded far, however, when I struck the fresh track of a ram; and, following it cautiously for about a mile through the open, it led into a dense patch of pine on the side of the mountain. Proceeding very carefully now, I soon made out the outline of a fine old ram that had wandered off here in the timber to be by himself. Giving him no time to run, for I was close upon him, certainly not farther than twenty-five yards, I planted a shot just back of the shoulder; but he did not seem to mind it. I gave him another when he started to walk slowly off. One more shot in the same place, and down he came. Even then he died hard. Such is the vitality of an old ram; for upon examining him I found his heart all torn to pieces. This was a good head of nearly

sixteen inches circumference of horns, and the girth of chest was forty-six inches. In returning to camp for horses to pack him on, I jumped five more sheep; but having done well enough, they were allowed to disappear in safety.

Sheep have a wonderfully keen vision, and it is absolutely useless to try to get to them if they once see you, unless you happen to be above them, and on their favorite runway; then they huddle together, and try to break back past you. The only safe rule is to travel high, and keep working up above their feeding-grounds. In the spring of the year they are much easier to kill than in the fall; for then the heavy winter snows have driven them out of the mountains, and they come low down after the fresh green grass. The rams are then in bands, having laid aside the hostility that later in the year seems to possess each and every one of them.

I was much interested once in watching a band of eight rams, all of them old fellows. They would feed early in the morning, and then betake themselves to a large rock which stood on a grassy slope, where they would play for hours. One of them would jump on the rock,

and challenge the others to butt him off. Two or three would then jump up, and their horns would come together with a clash that I could hear from my position, which was fully a quarter of a mile away. On one occasion I saw them suddenly stop their play, and each ram became fixed; there the little band stood as though carved out of stone. They remained that way for quite half an hour without a movement. I could not detect with the glasses the slightest motion, when, presently, three strange rams made their appearance. Here was the explanation that I was looking for. They had seen them long before I had. The three visitors were not very well received, but were compelled to beat an ignominious and hasty retreat.

As summer draws near, and the winter snow begins to disappear, bands of elk may be seen migrating toward their favorite ranges. The bulls are now together in bands of greater or less extent. Their horns are well grown out, but are soft, and in the velvet. The cows and calves stick closely to the thick timber. As the season advances, and the flies become troublesome, the bulls will get up

as high as they can climb, and seem to delight in standing on the brink of some mountain precipice. I have often wondered, in seeing them standing thus, whether they were insensible to the magnificent scenery that surrounded them.

Reader, what would you have given to see, as I have, a band of two hundred and fifty bull-elk all collected together on a beautiful piece of green grassy turf at an elevation of nine thousand feet? Here was a sight to make a man's nerves tingle! This was the largest band of bulls, by actual count, that I have ever seen; though my cousin and partner once saw in the fall of the year, including bulls, cows, and calves, fifteen hundred. This was on the memorable occasion when the only elk ever killed by any of my men gave up his life: and we have all concluded that this particular elk was frightened to death; for though three men shot at him, and each was confident he hit him, they always asserted afterward that no bullet-mark could be found on him.

Generally, in August, in each band of bulls there will be found one or two barren cows; about the end of August, after the bulls have rubbed the velvet off their

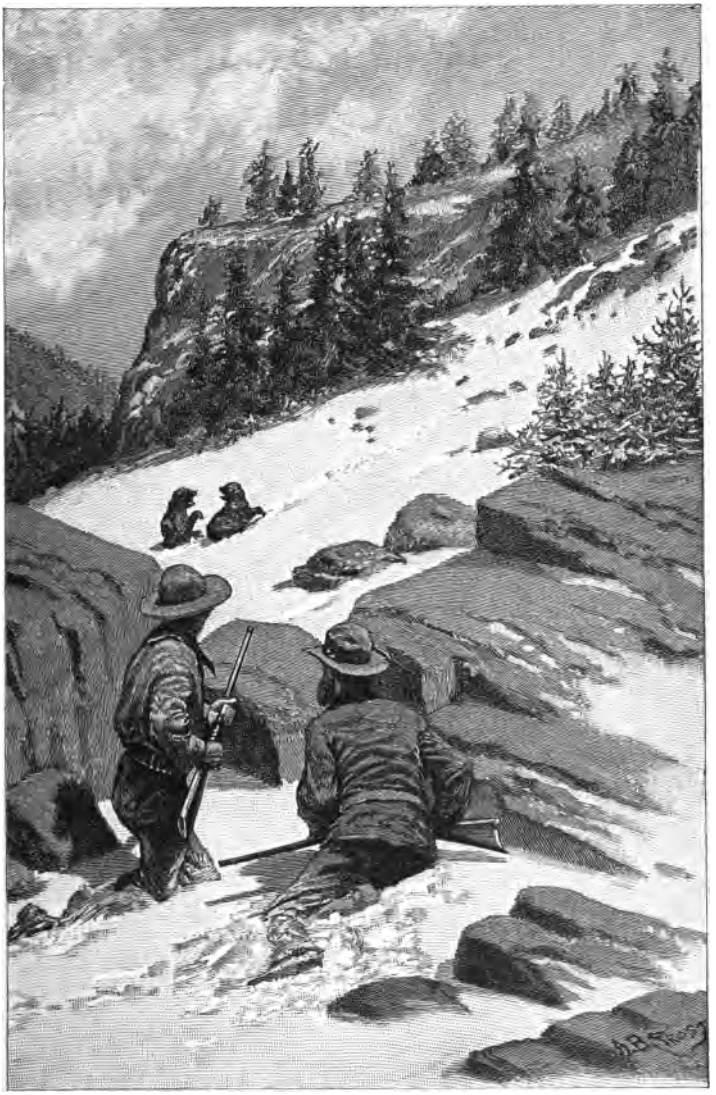
antlers, they will come back to the vicinity of the bands of cows. I have seen bulls as late as Sept. 4 peaceably feeding or resting among the bands of cows. Usually, in a band of fifty cows there would be three or four males, including, possibly, one or two spike-bulls.* I have seen these spike-bulls in the velvet as late as Sept. 4, though by that time the older bulls had mostly rubbed the velvet off. A little later, about Sept. 7, the bulls begin to challenge each other, — in hunting parlance, whistling. This, on a clear, frosty night, is sometimes extremely melodious, and it is one of the most impossible sounds to imitate. Hunting elk, if I may be pardoned for saying it, I do not consider very exciting sport to a man thoroughly versed in the woods. They are far too noble an animal to kill unnecessarily; and if one hunts them in September, when they are whistling, it is a very easy matter, guided by the sound, to stalk them successfully.

Elk, like the rest of the deer family, are excessively fond of saline matter. Their trails may be seen leading from every direction to the great alkaline licks that abound in certain parts of their mountain

* A spike-bull is a young elk carrying his first or dag antlers. These are single-tined, though in rare instances they are bifurcated.

ranges. Among other favorite resorts are springs, which make on steep wooded slopes a delightful boggy wallowing-place. The bulls revel in these from August to the middle of September. It is not an uncommon thing to kill them just as they emerge from their viscous bath coated with mud. The elk has a great deal of natural curiosity, and I have seen instances of it to an extraordinary degree where they have been but little hunted or alarmed. My friend Phillips of Washington, who was with me, will vouch for the veracity of this story, which I give as an example. We were wandering along the top of the mountain, some nine thousand feet up, trying to stalk some elk, not to shoot them, but to photograph them. We jumped a small band of bulls numbering about sixteen. They trotted slowly off, stopping to look back frequently, until all but two large bulls had disappeared. These walked slowly back to within fifty yards of where we were standing, and stopped, facing us.

It was truly one of the most charming sights one could have wished for, to have those graceful, sleek creatures almost close enough to caress. Presently, with a defiant snort, and with a succession of short barks, they would move away and come



The two Rascals on the Snowdrift

back again, repeating these manœuvres over and over again, until we got tired of trying to look like a brace of marble posts, and sat down. We thought this would frighten them, but it did not; and once I thought they were going to proceed from curiosity to more offensive operations, so close did they come to us. Even my caterwauling, as my friend unfeelingly characterized my attempt to imitate their challenges, did not seem to alarm them; and not until a full half-hour had elapsed did this pair of worthies jog off.

Elk are vigorous fighters; and while it seems but seldom that their combats terminate fatally, the broken points of their antlers, and their scarred and bruised bodies, bear testimony to the severity of their encounters. A full-grown elk stands about sixteen hands high, is about eight feet two inches long from nose to tip of tail, and with a girth around the chest of about six feet.

It was on the head of Wind River that I secured my largest head. The regularity of the points was somewhat marred, as the bull had evidently been fighting only a short time before I killed him. These horns were not very massive; but the length, measured along the outside curve,

is sixty-three and seven-eighths inches. The circumference between bay and tray is from seven and one-half to eight inches, and the greatest spread between antlers is forty-nine inches.

Probably more horrible lies have been told by bear-hunters than by any other class of men, except, perhaps, fishermen, who are renowned for their yarns. However, I trust that in the case of the few instances I have to give of my experience I can keep fairly within the bounds of truth.

Bear-hunting, as a general rule, I do not think would appeal to most sportsmen. It is rather slow work, and one is often very inadequately rewarded for the amount of time and trouble spent in hunting up bruin. There is hardly a portion of the mountains where there are not evidences of bears, but I do not believe that in any locality they are especially abundant. They have been hunted and trapped so long that those who survive are extremely cautious. In my experience there is no animal gifted with a greater amount of intelligence; and in this region the hunter's chief virtue, patience to wait and stay in one spot, is sure to be rewarded sooner or later with a good shot.

Let me say now that the danger and ferocity of the bear are, I think, very much overstated; yet there is just enough element of danger to make the pursuit of this animal exciting. Naturalists do not now apparently recognize more than two varieties of bear in the Rocky Mountains. That is, they class the cinnamon, silver-tip, and grizzly as grizzly bears. The other variety, of course, is the black bear. I am by no means sure that the grizzly bear will not be further subdivided after careful comparisons of collections of skulls.

Much has been said and written about the size and weight of the grizzly bear, and in most instances this has been mere guesswork. Lewis and Clark made frequent mention of this animal, and yet their estimate of the weight falls far below that of other writers. Only a few instances have come to my knowledge where the weight has been ascertained absolutely. A good-sized grizzly killed in Yellowstone Park last summer by Wilson, the government scout, weighed six hundred pounds. Colonel Pickett, who has a neighboring ranch to mine, and who has killed more bears than any man I know of, weighed his largest, which, if I remember rightly, weighed eight hundred pounds. One will,

of course, occasionally see a very large skin; and from its size it would seem impossible that the animal that once filled it out, if in good condition, could have weighed less than twelve hundred pounds. But I think it may be safely set down that the average weight of most specimens that one will get in the mountains will be under, rather than over, five hundred pounds.

To me, bear-hunting possesses a great fascination, and for years I have hunted nothing else. Personally I prefer to go after them in the spring. Their skins are then in their prime, the hair long and soft, and their claws (if valued as they should be) are long and sharp from disuse. Bears seek their winter quarters in Bad Lands and in the mountains. Those that adopt the former come out much earlier; consequently, if the hunter is on the ground soon enough, he may, by beginning in the lower lands first, and working toward the mountains, be reasonably sure of securing good skins as late as June. In the spring, too, bears are much more in the open, and travel incessantly in search of food.

It is highly interesting to watch them, when one has the chance, turning over stones, tearing open fallen trees, or rooting

like a pig in some favorite spot. Acres upon acres even of hard, stony ground they will turn up, and in other places it would be difficult to find a stone or rock they had not displaced. They will undermine and dig out great stumps. Ant-hills you will find levelled; and the thrifty squirrels, who have labored all the previous fall to make a cache of pine-nuts, are robbed on sight.

One spring, the work on the ranch being done, Woody and I took our pack-horses and proceeded to the mountains after bears. I had no sooner picked out a good camping-ground than it began to snow, and for four days we could not stir from camp. However, it finally cleared off, the sun came out bright and warm, and the little stream that we were on began boiling, tearing, and rushing along, full to the banks, causing us to move our camp back to higher ground. After breakfast, as we proposed to take a long day's trip, we took our horses with us. Riding up to the head of the stream we were on, looking for bears, no signs were to be seen, though plenty of sheep were in sight all the time. Riding on away above the cañon some six or eight miles, we could see some

elk. We closely scanned the neighboring heights, but still no sign of bears. Finally we turned off, and worked our way clear up on top of the mountain, determined to see the country anyway. Slowly we climbed upward, skyward, dragging our weary horses after us, until at noon we were nearly up, and concluded to lunch at the little rill of melted snow that came from a big drift on the mountain side.

To get to it, though, made necessary crossing the drift, and Woody led the way, with his favorite horse, old Rock, in tow; and here was where my laugh came in, to see those two floundering through that drift. At times all I could see of Rock were the tips of his ears. The crust was just strong enough to hold Woody up if he went "easy;" but he could not go easy with the horse plunging on top of him, and they would both break through. However, they had to go ahead in spite of themselves; and they were finally landed, half drowned and smothered, on dry ground. Of course, profiting by this experience, I circumnavigated this drift; and we sat down to our dry bread and bacon, washed down by a long pull from the handy snow-water. Ten minutes and a pipe were all that we allowed ourselves before

resuming our toil (for that is really the way to designate the ascent of these mountains).

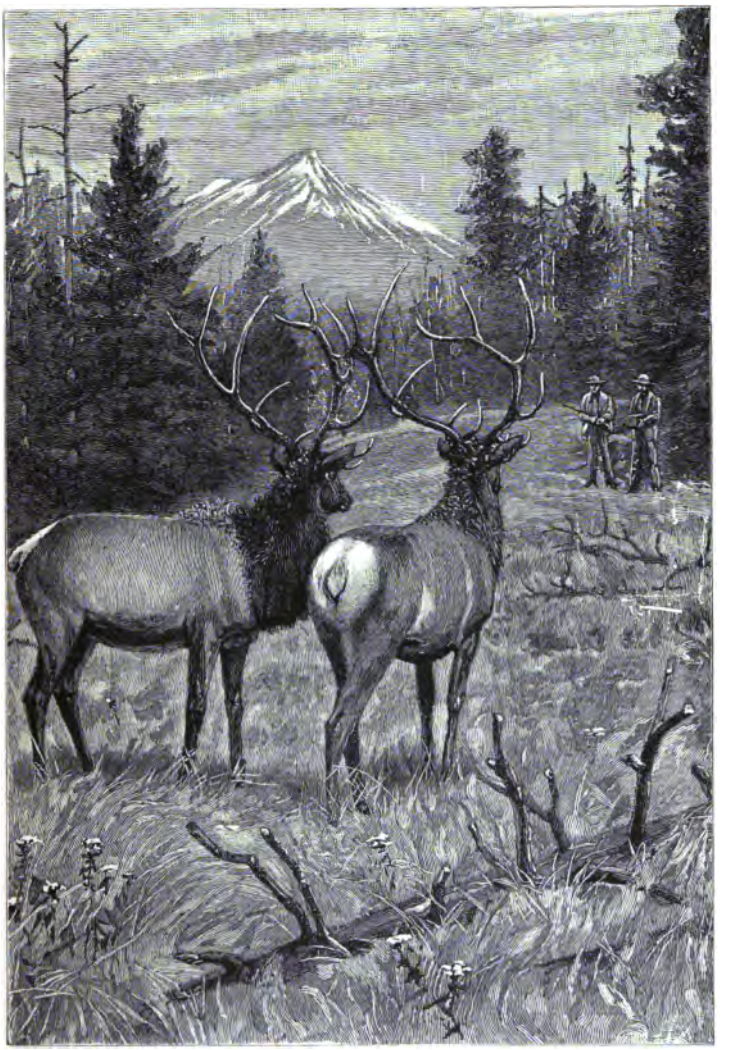
We saw six fine rams (of course, now that we did not want any); they did not seem to regard us with any uneasiness, permitting us to get within murderous distance, and I looked at their leader with some longing. He had such a noble head of curling, graceful, well-rounded horns. He must have been a powerful adversary when it came to butting. Stifling the intent, I passed by without disturbing them, and at last reached the top of the divide, and was repaid by a glorious view.

At that time Nature was not in her most smiling garb. It had been steadily growing colder; ominous clouds were gathering in the west, and an ugly rolling of thunder warned us that no genial spring-day, with shirt-sleeve accompaniment, was to gladden and cheer us. Still we must look for bears; so buttoning up our coats, and turning up our collars, we surveyed the country. At the same time it was impossible to forego a study of the grandeur of the view displayed before us.

Those who have seen the mountains and foot-hills only in the fall of the year, when every blade of grass is parched and

brown and dry, can form no adequate idea of the change that presents itself in the spring. Especially is one surprised when, standing on the top of some mountain height surrounded by everlasting snow, he looks down over the valleys, and sees the richness and vividness of the green-growing grasses which seem to roll up almost to his feet. As we stood there, we had a glorious panorama. The vast gathering storm was at our backs; and the sun, though not shining for us, was lighting up the broad valley below. Greybull River stretched away until it joined the Big Horn beyond. The whole range of the Big Horn Mountains was visible, their snow-tops glistening like a bank of silver clouds; and the main range we were standing on was brought out in all its dazzling grandeur. Snowdrift upon snowdrift, with gracefully curling crests, stretched away as far as the eye could reach, for miles and miles. Still we saw no bear; and while we were enjoying all this wonderful scenery we neglected the storm, and were soon enveloped in a raging tempest of wind and snow, with a demoniacal accompaniment of lightning and crashing thunder.

We hunched up our backs, and stumbled



Not to shoot, but to photograph them

along the ridge before the blast, and were soon brought up by a drift. However, here is luck for once! We saw the print of two fresh bear-tracks crossing the drift. All thoughts of the storm were lost in our delight at the vicinity of bears, for the sign was very fresh. Alas, though! we lost them after crossing the drift, and it was impossible to find them again upon the rugged soil of these ridges where the wind had blown the snow off. We circled round and round, studying every patch of snow; and my companion, Woody, looked and spoke doubtfully. At last I caught the trail again. Only a half-dozen tracks, but enough to show the right direction; and as we ascended the ridge the tracks were on, I saw the two rascals across the gulch on an enormous snowdrift, tearing and chewing at something, I couldn't make out what.

It was still snowing hard, but it was only a squall, and nearly over. The wind was wrong; it unfortunately blew toward the bears, and the only direction in which we could stalk them. Still an attempt had to be made. We took the bridles from our horses, and let down our hackamores, to let them feed comfortably and out of sight, while we crawled up the

ridge to where it joined the one the bears were on. We had to creep up a beastly snowdrift, which was soft, and no telling how deep.

It was deep enough, for we went through sometimes to our armpits. But what mattered it when we were at concert pitch, and bear for the tune? We were now on the same ridge as the bears. Cautiously, with the wind just a little aslant, we crawled down toward our prey, crossing another miserable snowdrift, into which we went up to our necks, where we brought up, our feet having touched bottom. We floundered out behind a small rock, and then looked up over at the bears. Too far to shoot with any certainty; and I said to Woody, "I must get closer." And so back we crawled.

Making a little détour, we bobbed up again, not serenely, for the wind was blowing on the backs of our necks straight as an arrow to where the bears were. But we were a little higher up on the ridge than they, and our taint must have gone over them; for when I looked up again one of the bears was chewing a savory morsel, and the other was on his hind legs, blinking at the sun, which was just breaking through the clouds. Wiping the

snow and drops of water and slush from our rifles and sights, and with a whispered advice from Woody not to be in a hurry if they came toward us, but to reserve fire in order to make sure work, — for no sheltering tree awaited us as a safe retreat, nothing but snowy ridges for miles, — I opened the ball with the young lady who was sitting down.

She dropped her bone, clapped one of her paws to her ribs, and to my happiness waltzed down the snowbank. As she now seemed to be out of the dance, I turned to her brother, — for such I judged him to be afterward, — who, with great affection, had gone down with her until she stuck her head in the snow. Not understanding this, he smelled around his fallen relative, when a hollow three-hundred-and-thirty-grain chunk of lead nearly severed one hip and smashed the other. He did not stop to reason, but promptly jumped on his relative, and then there occurred a lively bit of a scrimmage. Over and over they rolled, slapping, biting, and making the best fight of it they could, considering the plight they were in. Each probably accused the other of the mishap.

The snow was dyed a crimson hue. It was like the scene of a bloody battleground.

At last the aggrieved lady gave up, and plunged her head back into the snow, while her brother, not having any one to fight with, went off a short distance and lay down. We cautiously approached, bearing in mind that a snowdrift is a hard thing for pedestrians in a hurry to travel on; and when we got about ten feet from the first bear, I told my companion to snowball her, and see what effect that would have, for she looked too innocent to be dead and finished for.

But instead of doing so, he discarded his rifle, and reached for her tail. Ah, I thought so! for, as he gave a yank, up came her head, her jaws flew open like clockwork, and a snort came forth. But right between the eyes went the deadly messenger, smashing her skull, and ending any prolonged suffering for any of us. Her end accomplished, we turned to the other partner. He had been taking it all in, and was ready for a fight. He seemed pretty fit too. Fortunately he could not come up to us; the snowdrift was too steep, and he had only two serviceable legs to travel with. Still he had true grit, and faced us; but it was an unequal battle.

Again the bullet reached its victim, and brother ba'r lay quietly on his back, with

his legs in the air. No need to trifle with this bear's tail, as any fool could see that he was dead. However, we pelted him with a lot of snowballs; and then Woody went around to his stump of a tail, and pulled it, while I stood guard at his head. We took off our coats, and soon had the skins off the pair of them. These skins proved to be in the finest condition, though the bears themselves were poor. I should judge one was a three-year-old and the other a two-year-old. Still, they were good-sized grizzlies.

Those skins seemed to grow in size and weight as each of us lugged one up the side of the mountain, over shelving rock, snow, and loose gravel, to where we left our horses. Of course they were not there, and we had to go on carrying the skins, which were growing heavier and heavier every minute, until we tracked our horses to where they were feeding; and, in Western vernacular, "we had a circus" packing those skins on my horse. It was done at last, though, and to stay, by means of blindfolding him with a coat; and after a little while he settled down to work as though he had carried bears all his many years of service. I had a very nasty time in getting down the mountain after my horse slipped



A nasty time getting down the mountain.

and fell down a gap in the crown rock. We could not get the other down, so I took charge of my horse and skins, and made the rest of the descent in safety, though it looked squally for a bit when the old rascal's feet slid out from under him, knocking me down in the snow, and he on top; and I could feel that even with the fleecy covering the rocks were still very hard.

However, it was deep enough for me to crawl out, more scared than hurt; and soon we had sage-brush and grass under our feet, with an easy trail to camp, where a square meal inside of a stomach that sorely needed it soon made amends for all hardships. Wondering what those bear had been at work at, I went back the next day, and found that they had been tearing up a sheep that had died of scab, a disease that wild sheep are subject to.

To a thorough sportsman, killing bears after a successful stalk is by long odds the best and most exciting method, but the country must be such as permits of this; as, for instance, when there are long stretches of high mountains, plateaus, or ridges above or devoid of timber, where the bears resort to root, and where the hunter can from some elevated post look over a large area with the aid of glasses. The general procedure, though, is to put out bait; that is, to have the carcass of some animal to attract the bear; and many a noble elk or timorous deer has been thus sacrificed. To avoid this needless destruction, the writer has invariably taken along on his hunting-trips aged and worn-out horses, which answer admirably

when it comes to drawing bears to a carcass. Of course, this is not always a sure way; for the bear, if alarmed or disturbed, will only visit the carcass at night, and then, if the hunter is persistent and determined to get a shot, he may expect many weary hours of watching from a friendly pine.

I think I hear the reader say, What's the fun in shooting a bear from a tree? there is no risk in that. True, there is not; but it is when you come down from your perch that you may not feel quite so safe, as with limbs benumbed from cold and lack of circulation you climb down, knowing perhaps that several watchful pairs of eyes or cunning nostrils are studying your movements. Involuntarily your thoughts travel in the vein of your gloomy surroundings as you go stumbling on your way to camp: What if the bear should prefer live goose-flesh to dead horse?

One spring morning I was knocking around under the base of the mountains, and found myself, about dinner-time, so close to Colonel Pickett's cosey log cabin, that I determined to pay him a long-postponed visit. After an ample repast, including some delicious home-made butter, which I had not tasted for a month,

Woody and I, with our little pack-train, regretfully filed off, and, fording the river, took up our wanderings, not expecting to see our cheery host again for a year.

We had not proceeded far, though, when we met an excited "cow-puncher," who evidently had news to tell. He had been up on the side of the mountain, which was here a long grassy slope as smooth as any of our well-tended lawns, extending upward to where it joined the dense pine forest which covered the upper portion of the mountain. Our friend was the horse-wrangler for a neighboring ranch, and was out looking for horses. Did any one ever see a horse-wrangler who was not looking for missing stock?

When skirting the timber, he surprised, or was surprised by, a good-sized grizzly, which promptly chased him downward and homeward, and evidently for a short distance was well up in the race. Gathering from his description that the bear had been at work on the carcass of a steer that had died from eating poison-weed, I determined to go back and camp, and see if another skin could not be added to the score. It did not take long to pick out an ideal camping-spot, well sheltered, with plenty of dry wood, and trout from the

little stream almost jumping into the frying-pan.

Our horses had been having pretty rough times lately, and they lost no time in storing away as much of the rich grass as they could hold. They had plenty of society too; for the slope was dotted here and there with bunches of range cattle and bands of horses, not to mention the recent additions to the families of each in the shape of frolicsome calves and frisky foals, all busily at work. Bruin seemed rather out of place in such a pastoral scene; and yet, as one looked higher, beyond the sombre heights of the forest, toward the frowning crown rock, that resembled some mighty fortress forbidding farther progress, or the everlasting snow-peaks above, one could well fancy that wild animals must be up there somewhere, either in the dense woods, or in the still higher and safer retreats.

We at once examined the ground, and found the carcasses of two steers, one of which was untouched, but the other was very nearly devoured. All the signs pointed to more than one bear, and the ground was fairly padded down round the carcass they were using. Unfortunately, though, there seemed to be no place to

watch from, not a bush or rock to screen one while awaiting a shot. To cut a long story short, I watched that bait every afternoon and evening for a week; and though it was visited every night, I never got a sight of the prowlers. Bears will very often, when going to a carcass, take the same trail, but when leaving wander off in almost any direction. Taking advantage of this, and being satisfied that they were up in the timber through the day, we hunted for their trail, and found it on an old wood-road that led through the timber. To make sure, we placed the hind quarters of one of the steers just on the edge of the forest, and awaited developments. That night the bear found it, and, dragging it off, carefully cached it; so we determined to watch here.

I was much disappointed, however, as the daylight faded, to confess that if I was to get a shot it would have to be in the dark; so as soon as I found I could not see to shoot with any degree of safety, I got up in a pine-tree that commanded the road and was just over the bait. It was weary work watching; and, to make it still more uncomfortable, a heavy thunder-storm swept by, first pelting one with hail, then a deluge of rain and snow.

It was pitch dark, except when the black recesses of the forest seemed to be rent asunder during the vivid lightning. The whole effect was weird and uncanny, and I wished myself back under my soft, warm blankets. I could not well repress thinking of the early admonition of "never go under a tree during a thunder-storm." But what's that? One swift surge of blood to the heart, an involuntary tightening of the muscles that strongly gripped the rifle. I seemed to feel, rather than see, the presence of three strange objects that appeared to have sprung from the ground under me.

I had not heard a sound; not a twig had snapped; and yet, as I strained my eyes to penetrate the gloom, there, right at my feet, almost touching them, in fact, I made out the indistinct forms of three bears, all standing on their hind legs. Oh, what a chance it was if it had not been so dark! I could not even see the end of my rifle, but I knew I could hit them, they were so close. But to hit fatally? Well, there is no use thinking about it now the bears are here. Trust to luck, and shoot!

Hardly daring to breathe, I fired. The scuffling on the ground, and the short, sharp snorting, told me I had not missed; but I could see nothing, and could only hear the

bear rolling over and over, and growling angrily. Presently there was quiet, and then with angry, furious champing of jaws, the wounded animal charged back directly under me; but I could not see to shoot again, worse luck! From sundry sounds, I gathered the bear was not far off, but had lain down in a thicket which was about one hundred yards from my tree. I could hear an occasional growl, and the snap of dead branches, broken as she turned uneasily. I did not know exactly what to do. To descend was awkward; and to stay where I was, wet and chilled to the bone, seemed impossible. It was most unlikely the other bears would come back; however, thinking it would be prudent to stay aloft a little while longer, I made up my mind to stick it out another half-hour. During this wait I fancied I could see shadowy forms moving about, and I could surely hear a cub squalling.

The light was now a little better, and, though still very dark, was not so intense. Just as I had screwed up courage to descend, another bear came up under the tree, and reared up. This time I made no mistake, and almost simultaneously with the rifle's report a hoarse bawl proved to me that I had conquered. Glad at almost any

cost to get out of my cramped position, I sung out to Woody to lend a hand, as I proposed descending; and as he came up I came down, and then we discussed the situation. The proximity of the wounded bear was not pleasant, but then the dead one must be opened in order to save the skin. But what if the latter were not dead? Hang this night work! Why can't the bear stick to daylight? But to work! There was the motionless form to be operated on. Inch by inch we crept up, with our rifles at full cock stuck out ahead of us, until they gently touched the inanimate mass. It was all right, for the bear was stone dead. Hastily feeling in the dark, as neatly as possible the necessary operations were nearly concluded, when simultaneously we both dropped our knives and made for the open. . . . It makes me perspire even now when I think of that midnight stampede from an enraged and wounded grizzly.

CAMPING AND HUNTING IN THE SHOSHONE

By W. S. Rainsford



The Outfit.

WHEN only eighteen I killed, or helped to kill, my first buffalo; and having tried in vain, like many another greenhorn, to cut out his tongue (by forcing the clinched jaws apart, and coming to the Irishman's conclusion that he died of the locked-jaw), was fain to content me with cutting off his tail. At that time (1868) I spent part of the spring, and all of the summer, fall, and early winter, on the plains and among the mountains of British North America. Ever since I was able to read, it had been my dream that some day I should see the countless herds of buffalo wandering in their dark, dusty, string-like bands on the boundless plains; and I shall ever be glad that I lived to see my dream fulfilled. Then there were plenty of Indians, and

buffalo too, especially in the northern part of the continent. On the great plains of the Saskatchewan both were abundant. The buffalo were not the poor, skin-and-bone, mangy remnant of a noble race that survived even till 1884, hoof-worn with perpetual and rapid journeying, ceaselessly seeking a rest they could nowhere attain. Then the great herds moved leisurely, and leisurely the plain-Indian moved in their wake. Millions of buffalo there were that had never heard the deadly crack of the skin-hunter's rifle; and there at least remained in those northern lands some thousands of Indians who had never tasted the deadlier whiskey of the free-traders, as the men were called who pushed their way into the great territories where none but the Hudson Bay Company had hitherto come. (Let me say, for the honor of the Hudson Bay Company, in those years at least, that they never, on any condition whatever, supplied liquor to the Indians.) I have said I shall always be thankful I saw the buffalo in their glory, and saw the Indian, too, as he was — not the ideal Indian, I need scarcely say, but yet certainly not the debased hanger-on of a frontier civilization that he is to-day.

To enjoy an old-fashioned buffalo-run

— to start with a hundred and fifty almost naked men and boys, in a helter-skelter race of miles, over ground full of holes, and covered with thundering herds, while hunted and hunters were rolled in clouds of dust — is to have enjoyed something that can never be enjoyed again. Who that once joined in such a chase could ever forget it? The strange, motley company, — the old chief, armed and mounted as well as any man in the tribe, but taking small part in the charge or slaughter; the young warrior, stripped almost naked, meaning business, and looking, every inch of him, what he meant, too poor to use the costly ammunition that the Hudson Bay Company could alone supply him with, on buffalo, and so relying on his short bow; the boy of fourteen, just old enough to bestride "a runner," and bend a bow; and last, but not least, the motley band of squaws, some still carrying their babies, — though for them this was no mere holiday pastime, — leading and riding ponies behind which the long tepee-poles, fastened securely at the sides, trailed for fifteen feet along the grass; then the cautious approach, the old man leading and signalling each movement of all our band. My heart almost thumps against my ribs

again at the very remembrance of how it thumped that morning when slowly our long crescent of riders rose above the last swell of the plain that hid us from the outlying bulls, scarcely four hundred yards away.

One yell and we were off, each man for himself and the devil take the hindermost — a thing he was apt to do; for in the shape of badger-holes he lay in wait for those unlucky ones who, choked with dust that hid both herd and ground, floundered in the rear. The safest as well as the pleasantest place was in front.

But I do not desire to write an account either of the sport or scenery I enjoyed in 1868; suffice it to say, I there and then fell in love with the Rocky Mountains, as almost all who have hunted, camped, or been hunted among them have fallen in love. I would rather give some results of the five trips I have made during the summer and fall since then to those mountainous regions, lying within the bounds of the United States, that may be readily reached by the Northern Pacific Railroad; for here await those who will take the trouble to seek them magnificent scenery, and, as yet, fair sport. Why do so few of our young men go West for recrea-

tion? There is no land where nature recreates a man as she does there. You literally renew your youth. The climate is invigorating beyond words. For nervously exhausted men, for weary brains, there is simply nothing to touch it. I have gone to the mountains thoroughly fagged out, unable to sleep well or eat well — life a burden, and work an impending horror. In a fortnight I have been eating as many meals a day as I could prevail on my men to cook, and have been glad to fill up chance spaces in my internal economy with raw bacon. Yes, many a time, after a monumental dinner, when we have gone into camp at five in the afternoon, have I eaten with relish that most lasting of all provisions, a piece of raw bacon, before turning in. It is true, some at first find the rarefied atmosphere of the mountains trying to chest or heart, and many also complain of loss of appetite and loss of sleep; but if the man is sound in limb and lung, and if he does not overdo it or overexert himself at the very beginning, but does take regular exercise, in ten days or so all life seems to awaken within him; he may not sleep so long or so heavily, for he has probably camped at an altitude of eight or nine

thousand feet (excellent camping-places are sometimes found at a height of ten thousand feet or over), and he does not need as much sleep as though he were at sea-level. He may puff and blow like a grampus as he faces a moderate hill; for he has scarcely realized yet that the atmosphere is so rare that he must boil his potatoes (if he is lucky enough to have any) for at least two hours, and he will do better if he boil them all the morning, and that he cannot, by twenty-four hours' boiling, make beans soft enough to feed to his horse. But he is growing younger, not older. The world of cark and care seems very far away, walled out by the heavy mists that roll up from the plains. What a fool he was to bother his soul, as he did, with a thousand useless things! Now, having a good warm flannel shirt, plenty of blankets, good meat, good bread, and coffee to make glad the heart of man, thoroughly congenial companions, glorious days and nights — what more can he want? Now he needs no longer to cry,

> "O that a man would arise in me,
> That the man I am might cease to be!"

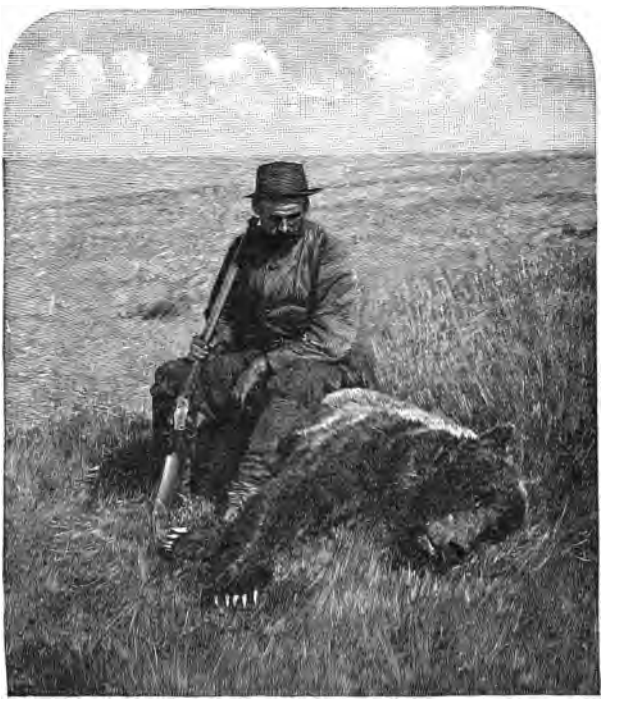
for he does not want the man he feels he is to cease to be. The man he now is he

could afford to go on with forever; for he is a good-natured chap, who never did, or never will do, an unkinder thing to anyone than to laugh at him when he gets into a scrape. Every day be can walk farther and eat more. His shoulder does not ache as it did to the steady pressure of his rifle. Somehow the ground up in the mountains does not seem as hard as it used to be those first few nights on the plains, after he left the railroad, and when, hunt as he would, he could not find a square inch of anything softer than a flint on which to repose his weary hips. And now that he is in permanent camp, and the boys have time to chop up and lay under his waterproof great armfuls of the sweet-smelling mountain pine-tops, no spring-mattress ever afforded delights comparable to those his couch yields to him.

From six weeks of such living one returns to his work a new man, — his muscles set, his eye clear, and his hand as steady as his appetite, — thankful for the good time he has had, and thankful, doubly thankful, for the home and friends, or perhaps wife and children, that make the thought of return again so sweet.

As to scenery, there is a grandness, a

loneliness, a majesty, about the views in the Rocky Mountains that cannot be surpassed. Here you have not snow to the same extent as in Switzerland; though I have seen a snow-field fully fifteen miles long and ten broad, and no one can guess how many hundred or thousand feet deep, in the almost unexplored granite range that lies between Clarke's Fork Mines and the Northern Pacific Railroad. But the rocky scenery is wonderful, — wonderful in form, wonderful in color, and wonderful in size. The very solid earth seems sometimes to gape asunder; as you enter some cañon you can scarcely persuade yourself you are ascending, since the mighty walls of rock on either hand so lean over to each other that it seems as though the path led downward, and not, as it does, upward. One of the finest bits of rocky scenery I remember to have seen anywhere is within three days' easy ride of the Northern Pacific Railroad, and on the road to Cooke City Mines. A long valley of some twenty-four miles leads easily up to the divide, from the East Fork of the Yellowstone, narrowing as it rises. Some seven or eight miles from Cooke, on the left as you ascend, a vast wall of basalt rises almost sheer from the bed of the stream.



His first Grizzly.

It cannot be less than three thousand five hundred feet in height, and, I should fancy, is over a mile along its base. When I first looked up at it, its great dark breast was braided all over with a hundred milky, wavy, flashing waterfalls. For a week we had almost continuous rain; and these warm showers, for it was July, had hastened the destruction of the snow-beds on its crown, and down to the valley fell or

trickled, literally, hundreds of streams, separating, spreading, uniting, and spreading again, as they crept or thundered downward. No words can convey any idea of the mingled beauty and grandeur of falling water and immovable basalt when smitten by the glory of the setting sun. One autumn evening, two years after, we camped at the same spot. We were smoking the last pipe of peace before turning in, when one of our party noticed a clear light falling on the summit above us. As we watched, the light crept slowly downward; at first we scarcely realized that it was the moon. We were down, remember, in a veritable chasm, one side of which — the side before us — was about three thousand feet higher than the other; and thus the moonbeams lit up its edge long before they touched the little prairie at its feet, where our camp lay. A great belt of clouds lay on the rocky ridge at our back; and athwart these the moonlight passed, casting their moving shadows on the great gray mirror we were looking up at. What grotesque shapes they took, as they wound and unwound their long folds! There we sat and watched them, until at last such moonlight as you can only see when you are almost seven thousand feet above the damper,

denser air in which ordinary life is to be sustained, fell full into the gorge.

I recall, too, another bit of rocky scenery as unlike this one I have tried to sketch as I can well fancy is possible; and I single it out of a possible score of such places because it, like the first, is accessible to ordinary travellers, — the mouth of Clarke's Fork Cañon. Clarke's Fork River rushes to the plains through one of the grandest cañons in the Rocky Mountains. For fifteen miles an old and difficult hunter's trail leads down its precipitous sides; but this is not much used at present, such travel as does find its way to Cooke City Mines from the eastward going over the long, but comparatively easy, ascent of Dead Indian Mountain. At a first glance, the river-gorge is absolutely impassable; a sentinel-cliff seems to guard its mountain solitudes, and bar all human progress upward. I have heard my hunter say that, when trout-fishing in one of the deepest spots in that cañon, he saw clearly the stars at mid-day; and I believe it, for even where the steep trail passes — and it passes at a considerable height above the torrent, and so avoids the deepest gloom — it is murky enough.

But the view of the rocky gateway to

this chasm is alone worth a journey, and of it I wish to speak. Sheer from the water, without one break on its face, a silvery cliff, looking almost south, rises five thousand feet into the sky. I do not know, I am ashamed to say, the nature of the formation; but in the sunlight its sheen is most silvery. Opposite it stands a mountain so rocky and precipitous that no man or beast can ascend it; here and there belted with pine, and as dark as its brother-sentinel is fair. I saw these one early morning in September, when we had turned unwillingly homeward, resisting the strong temptation of a first tracking snow; saw them all crusted and crowned with their first winter icing. As we rode, we were not a mile from their bases, yet these were absolutely invisible, shut out by a solid wall of dense white cloud; but their heads, for the topmost thousand feet or so, were as clear as sunlight could make them.

An ordinary hill of less than two thousand feet looks Alpine when you are near its base, if that base be hidden in fog and the crown be clear. Many who read this can doubtless recall experiences on misty mornings, when on the canoe, or lake-shore or river-bank, they looked up at cloud-girdled mountains that, when thus



Head of a Grizzly.

seen, seemed so vast in their proportions they could scarcely believe them to be the old companions of the night before. But these rocky solitudes seen as we saw them that morning, — well, I can liken them to nothing I know of. We were not an especially emotional party ; but they did seem to us that morning, as they towered aloft into the limitless ether, to belong to another "land that is very far off."

Where can a more lovely series of mountain-lakes be found than those that lie hidden in the great forests that stretch for a distance of, say, one hundred and

fifty miles by one hundred over that central plateau where rise the Yellowstone and Snake Rivers? Till within a few years the region was almost unknown. In 1868 I met a hunter who claimed to have seen a great lake, more than twenty-five miles long, and almost as broad, in the heart of the mountains, on whose margin great fountains of boiling water spouted, and where no Indian dared to go. Of course he yarned considerably about cañons where lay the bones of herds of petrified bison, and gaping cracks whence steam and boiling mud rushed forth. Allowing, as you must allow out West, for the play of a hunter's imagination, there was a considerable substratum of truth in what he said; but none of us, and, so far as we could learn, no one that ever met him, believed a word of it. Of course the existence of the extraordinary region of the Upper Yellowstone was known to a few, but there was very little accurate or certain knowledge of it. Indeed, the policy that the Government still pursues in regard to this great Alpine region seems curiously stupid. At various points, commanding natural western highways, are stationed small military posts; but the officers and men condemned to live in them,

from year's end to year's end, are not only not encouraged to make themselves acqainted with the intricacies of the vast mountain regions lying near them, but are so hampered by a cheese-paring policy that even a hunting-trip of a few weeks is almost an impossibility.

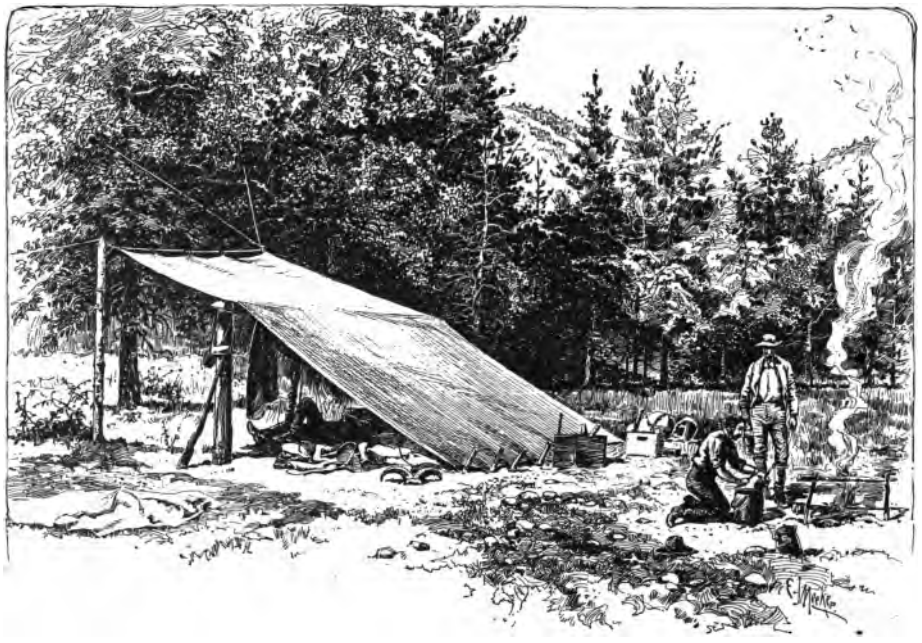
Now, an Indian outbreak may not be likely to occur in the future, but it is still far from impossible that it should occur. Were the Crows (who still have the best horses in the West, and claim perhaps three thousand warriors) to go on the war-path, there is no military force in that region that could prevent them reaching the mountains. Once there, for some months at least, they could subsist on scattered bands of cattle and game. Such an outbreak would be followed by terrible loss of life; for all the country is now studded with isolated ranches and small settlements, and to dislodge them from perhaps the most difficult natural fortress imaginable, with United States infantry, only accustomed to barrack-square tactics, and such cavalry as might be attainable, would be a costly task.

No smarter officers, no keener sportsmen, are to be found anywhere than can be found at our frontier posts, but, look

longingly as they may toward the blue line on the horizon, transport is denied them; they are not, as a rule, men of large private means, and cannot afford to invest in transport for themselves, and so, if I may be pardoned the hackneyed quotation — metaphorically

> "Their limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
> But rusted with a vile repose."

It is well known out West, that nothing but a lucky hit of one of its best guides saved from complete annihilation, during the Custer campaign, a very important command that had ventured after the Indians into the Big Horn Mountains. The Sioux corralled the soldiers, who were in great danger, and only escaped at last by night, on foot, leaving their fires burning and their horses tied in the timber. Thoroughly organized pack-trains used to be part of the establishment of all military posts near the mountains. Now almost all these have been broken up, the packers attached to them dismissed, and the very complicated gear that is absolutely necessary to carrying supplies on mule or on horseback is in such a state that it is, to all intents and purposes, useless for emergency service. Neither mules nor packers



A Camping Outfit for Eight.

can possibly be secured in a hurry for such a work as a mountain campaign implies; and to send troops, no matter how skilful or how ably handled, into the field without them, would be to send them to defeat.

In a formation such as that of the Rocky Mountains, the unexpected is the common. A "divide" looks as though you could march a regiment along it; you get up there, and lo! it ends in a knife-edge; a great river swirls deeply and quietly at your feet; its pathway downward surely can afford you a trail upward. You come to a dead standstill in a mile or two; and the reverse of this is true. From Sunlight (a pretty name, I think, for a pretty place and a most forlorn little log shanty, of which I am in part the proud possessor) a long valley leads up to one of the grandest groups of peaks I know anywhere. This Sunlight is quite well known in the Clarke's Fork region. The old trail from Billings, on the Northern Pacific Railroad, to Cooke runs through it; and to go from the park to the Stinking Water country and Gray Bull, where there is now a considerable cattle industry, you must pass by Sunlight. Prospectors, the best of all mountaineers and explorers, are supposed to have gone over every foot of that valley

and its bold sides. It used, too, to be a favorite resort of meat-hunters, when the first rush to the mines carried hundreds on to the head-waters of Clarke's Fork; and yet, for all this, no one ever believed that a pack-horse could be led up the mountain at its head and over into the park. Prospectors and hunters were fain to go back to Sunlight, and thence by Lodge Pole Creek round to Cooke Mines, and down by Soda Butte to the Yellowstone, a circuit of not less than seventy-five miles.

Two years ago we went up that valley after a band of elk, and, having killed some, set traps for bear and hunted sheep there for a week or more. One day Frank Chatfield, my hunter, and I discovered what seemed an easy pass up to the divide; and, taking all the outfit along, soon after we easily made the ascent, without one mishap in a day's march. I mention this as an instance of the unexpected; for, standing ten miles farther down the valley, its head seemed one grand mass of precipitous rocks and snow-fields. We afterward came down from a camp, three miles on the other side of the divide, to Sunlight, making one of the longest mountain marches I can remember having made in one day. It must have been thirty miles,

if not more. I doubt if anyone since then has taken our trail. I know, at the time, none of the old-stagers thereabout would believe we crossed where we said we did. The old-time Tory is found out West among hunters and prospectors, as he still survives in the more civilized East.

For several years Government surveys have been gradually mapping the Yellowstone Park; but the park itself (though here and there intersected or encroached on by mountains) is a great hollow, surrounded on all sides — more especially on the west and southwest — by a wilderness of the wildest mountains within our borders, almost unexplored, so far as the Government is concerned. Here only, in the park, so far as I know, has any thorough work been attempted. There are, of course, maps issued by the Office of the Chief Engineer at Washington (the last of these bears date 1881); but to take a hunting outfit through the mountains by its help alone necessitates going slowly and feeling your way. It would not be a safe guide by which to march a column of troops. The inaccuracies of these maps I know from actually having proved them.

Before I turn away from the region of Clarke's Fork, let me say, for the benefit

of anyone who wishes to hunt sheep, that there are few places where he may hope for so good success. He is not obliged to invest in a large outfit, or undertake a long trip, since it is near the railroad. Five or six days from either Stillwater or Cinnabar would bring him well up Crandle Creek, or the north fork of Clarke's Fork; and on the heads of these streams, and a stream running almost parallel to them, called Dead Indian, there are to-day, and will probably be for years, a large number of sheep. During a trip of six weeks in that region my hunter and I counted over six hundred. Let him not, however, attempt this sort of hunting unless he is in pretty good trim and has his bellows in order; for, to hunt sheep with either success or safety, he must be able to carry both himself and his rifle up and down steeps as sheer as man can climb, for from eight to twelve or even more hours at a stretch, at a mean height of about nine thousand feet; not every man who comes West can do this. I have seen one who could hold his own with any in the Adirondacks play out utterly; and on these steeps, often slippery and very dangerous, overfatigue adds an element of danger most undesirable, and spoils entirely the pleas-

ure of the other members of the party. For this reason I never, when I can help it (*i.e.*, when I can get meat any other way), begin the trip by attempting hard sheep-hunting; better wait till regular and more moderate exercises have braced the nerves and muscles; better, too, wait till each knows pretty well what he can and cannot do. If you have patience, sooner or later you may get a ram in an easy place, and so secure your "head;" but remember that following this shyest and noblest of all Rocky Mountain game animals makes larger demands on your skill and patience, as well as on your steadiness of head and hand, than any other sport.

Three more pieces of advice let me briefly give: First, never go up or down any specially steep or dangerous piece of rock when you don't feel you can return the way you came. A fall on the rocks (like Mercutio's rapier-wound, that was not "deep as a well, but yet was enough") may not be from a height that you can call a precipice, yet may be quite sufficient to spoil the trip, not for yourself only, but for your companions as well. Second, be careful when you are on "conglomerate," a very common formation in mountains.

No rock is so treacherous; its less compact formation admits of the loosening caused both by heat and ice. On limestone or on granite, or even on basalt, you can safely trust your weight to a very narrow foothold; not so with conglomerate. Any tyro in mountain-climbing knows enough to make perfectly sure of his handgrip before seeking a new rest for his foot; and then, again, make sure of the footing before reaching up or out with a disengaged hand. On the rocky formations I have mentioned, there can be little danger if caution is not neglected; but on conglomerate, extra care is necessary; hand and foot will sometimes give way suddenly and simultaneously. I had a fall in this way, two years ago, that came very near being serious; providentially, a heavy snowfield lay directly below me, and I plumped safely into its most charitable bosom. Charity was cold on that occasion, but more than comforting. It was entirely my own fault; I had broken the first rule of prudence, and had gone up a "chimney" where I could not possibly go down, and so was obliged to make a descent over a very dangerous and icy piece of conglomerate. I trust and believe I learned a lesson.



A Dead Grizzly.

The third piece of advice is worth both the others: Go slow. Go slow when you are going up; all good walkers start slow. Once get thoroughly leg-weary, and all enjoyment for the day is over. I first learned the need of going slow in 1868; we were after goats, our first goats too; there they were, not fifteen hundred feet above us, and an easy stalk. Between our camp and the mountain-foot a soft, boggy, mossy swamp, full of dead timber, stretched for above half a mile. We had Indians (never take Indians; they are not worth their keep as hunters). We had done

nothing but ride for months; all our hunting had been on horseback, a poor preparation for work after goats. To make a long story short, those Indians started off on the dead-run. We had no fresh meat, I must say in extenuation of this proceeding. I fancied I could run if they could; and, too proud to confess my forebodings, I started off in their wake. Anyone who has tried running in a swampy Selkirk valley will sympathize with the experience I went through for the next fifteen minutes, and none who have not can. Suffice it to say, I got to the foot of the steep a badly pumped lad. There a youthful, fourteen-year-old urchin, weighing about ninety pounds I should say, and looking as fresh as paint, offered to carry my thirteen-pound double-barrelled Rigby. I blessed him, and up we went, still at the run. What devilish power got into those Indians' legs I cannot to this day say; I only know that I went till first I could not speak, and then I could not breathe, and then I could not see; and when vision returned I was alone, without even the poor satisfaction of possessing a useless rifle. Of course, I never saw the goats again till they carried them into camp. But I learned two les-

sons, — one, never to start off at a run, or even a very rapid walk; the other, never to let a hunter I paid go ahead of me when near game. A slow, steady pace is the pace to tell. Don't stop to get your wind; second wind will come in time. Let not scenery or any other device of the evil one tempt you to sit down, or look around, or chat, etc. When you are after game that is in sight, first make your stalk, go to the highest point; the scenery is sure to look, if possible, better still when you have your game at your knees, and frequent pauses, when you are doing the hardest part of the work, do not really rest you, and do waste a great deal of time.

Perhaps there is nothing so intoxicating as a snow-slide; to shoot down, down, over the cool, smooth surface for a thousand, yes, sometimes two thousand feet at a time, and just enough of risk to make it interesting; but here, again, a new hand must go slow. My hunter, Frank Chatfield, than whom there is not a better shot, a better mountaineer, a better tracker, or a better man in the mountains, is a terrible fellow down-hill. How he keeps his balance on a snow-field, turning one foot into a toboggan, the other cocked up in front,

while he steers with his rifle-butt, is to-day a mystery to me. I rashly once, and only once, tried to keep up with him on a snow-slide, and only succeeded in making myself feel, from my head to my heels, like a very-much-grated nutmeg. I almost broke my rifle, did tear my hand, and so hopelessly damaged my single remaining hunting-suit that when, clad in what was left of it, a fortnight after, I humbly sought to claim a place in the Northern Pacific Railroad dining-car, the conductor was for summarily ejecting me, and said frankly that such as I had no right to come in there.

Lay the lesson to heart, therefore, and if you want to keep your clothes, or get your dinner, go slow on snow; keep both feet down, put on plenty of brake, and you will have a delicious slide on your way to the valley. In this way, snow-slopes that seem absolutely precipitous from below, and even from above look too steep for safety, may be descended at a considerable pace and without risk. They are, however, I must confess, a little scaring at first; and I don't think a team of mules could have dragged me down the first I tried, had there been a possibility of getting home any other way. They are very

unlike the snow-fields in the Alps, where the snow is much softer, and where I have seen them not nearly so steep.

Before referring more specially to camping and hunting in this life-giving region, let me add one word about the lake-system of the Upper Yellowstone. Where can such lakes be found as these? The great Yellowstone, Lewis, Shoshone, Jackson, and Heart Lakes, all lying within an area of sixty miles square, clear as only Rocky Mountain lakes can be, full of trout, still reflecting the stately antlers of the elk, and now and then the uncouth form of the moose, and still affording a safe home to the much-persecuted beaver. Fortunately these lakes, excepting Jackson, are within the boundaries of the park. If the suggestions of the gentlemen who have done such valuable work in surveying that region are adopted by the Government, the park will be doubled in size, and thus a safe retreat, and, what is of more importance still, a safe summer breeding-place will be preserved as an inviolate sanctuary for our noble American game. None of these lakes is so little known, or more worth the knowing, than Heart Lake. It is not easy of access, as it lies in a dense forest ten miles due south of the Thumb of the great

Yellowstone Lake, hidden by a short but steep range of hills that rise over two thousand five hundred feet above the unbroken woodland.

We were bound to get to Heart Lake; none of our men had ever been there. For days and days we had been in the timber, — timber that stood as thick as Yellowstone pine can stand, — and often were without a sign of a trail. We were having terrible bother with our packs, and the men wanted to get out of the timber at any cost; nothing would do them but a direct ascent of the mountain-ridge which I have just mentioned.*

Up we got at last; and at our very feet lay the lovely lake, blue as cloudless sky and clear, unruffled waters ever looked. We had, as was not to be wondered at, a very bad time getting down; and then at the foot lay a "formation" — as hot-springs and geysers are called out there — full of treacherous spots. Into these, of course, two of the most troublesome pack-horses floundered. It was late in the day; the march had been long and very wearying, with constant shifting of packs in the

* If you want to get on with your men, tell them where you want to go, where you will go at any cost, and then don't bother them about the road. Most greenhorns drive their men wild with perpetual questioning.

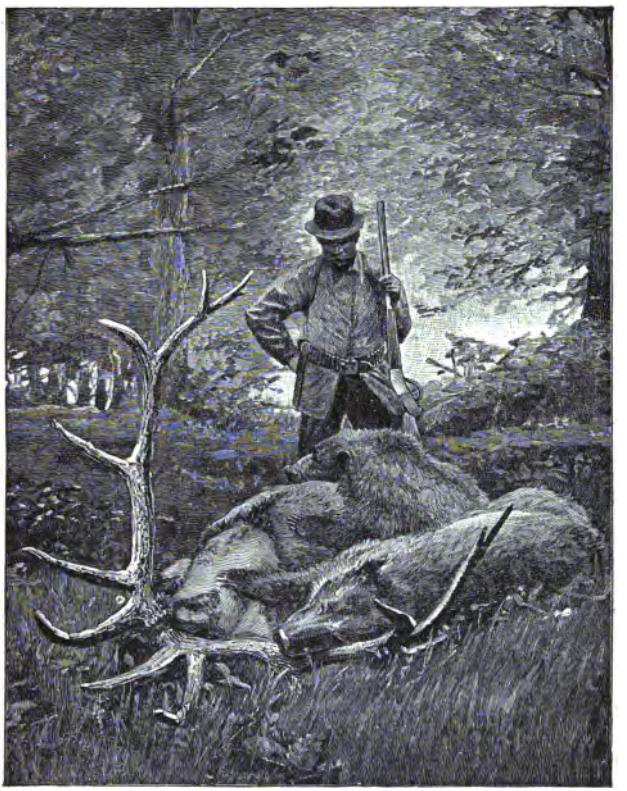
timber and on the hill; and if there was a little more sulphur in the air, just for fifteen minutes or so, than the neighboring springs accounted for, Western men, at least, will make some allowances.

At last we were in camp, and such a camp! Circled by a belt of old pines, gnarled and twisted by the winter winds that had swept across the lake till their limbs were more like the limbs of oak than those of coniferæ. On one side a narrow strip of snowy sand; on the other a green meadow, down which flowed a clear stream, heated to about 70° by many hot-springs that flowed in farther up. The sandy shore ended in a little spit running out some four hundred yards into the water; and there, in perfect content, and moved by a slowly awakening curiosity, sat a sedate family of geese, — father and mother and some ten inexperienced but well-developed youngsters. South of us lay the water; east of us spread the unbroken forest, rising higher and higher till all vegetation fell away from the scarped and turreted summits of the main range of the Shoshone; while on our right, to the west, sheer out of the lake rose Mount Sheridan almost ten thousand five hundred feet, its broad forehead still capped with

snow, while a little farther on another summit rose, fiery red where the setting sun smote on its great cliffs, once clay, but now turned to red concrete by subterranean fire.

Our dinner of elk-steak, seasoned by one or two of the very last remaining onions, delicious bread (two parts flour and one part Indian corn), and, oh! such coffee, is a memory with me still. Then pipes were lit, and we laid us down "upon the yellow sand." And over the crest of the mountain peeped the horn of the new moon; not a sound broke the stillness, save when, at regular intervals of fifteen minutes, a geyser, hidden in the pines about a half-mile away, burst into its brief tumult. Many lovely camps we remember; but, among them all, none were more beautiful than that by Heart Lake.

My first ambition was naturally, as I have said, to kill a buffalo; that task once accomplished, and repeated to the point of satiety, the aim and object of my life, during my two months' summer rest, was to slay a grizzly. My first hunting expedition included a trip from Saint Paul (then almost the eastern terminus of the railroad) to Vancouver Island, and during that long journey I never saw a grizzly. One day,



Caught in the Act.

coming on the very fresh trail of an immense fellow, the Indians promptly refused to take any part whatever in investigating the neighborhood; and as I was a most untrustworthy shot, and had only a double-barrelled muzzle-loading rifle, all things considered, perhaps this action of theirs

was an evidence of their proverbial sagacity.

My next essay was undertaken thirteen years after, in 1881. We had, my friend and I, a magnificent trip; rode all over the Big Horn Mountains, and killed plenty of game — indeed, we could not help it. In those days the mountains were full of deer, elk, and bear too; but somehow none of us ever saw a grizzly. I cannot to this day understand our want of success. Four trips I have made since then; but I never saw half the amount of fresh signs which we saw on the western slope of those mountains, on a stream named, in the maps, Shell Creek. Had I known as much as I know now, I could have made a much larger bag than the one I made on my last trip, when I had extraordinary luck, and killed eight grizzlies in three weeks, our party accounting altogether for twelve bears, two only of the twelve being trapped. I think this is the largest authentic score I have heard of, as made in late years, in so short a time.

I understand that the Big Horn region is still a black-tail country; but elk are rare, buffalo extinct, and cattle have driven out bear. As a rule, you will only find grizzlies where elk are, or have recently

been. The truth must be told: The first real grizzly we did see (we once shot a mule in mistake for one) was in a trap. In the Eastern woods bears are commonly trapped by baiting a pen, built of logs, with fish or offal, and setting before it a twenty-five pound spring-trap. I need not now speak of traps built of logs only, where a dead-fall is used; none of these are sufficiently strong to hold or to kill a moderate-sized grizzly. To these traps, as they are set in the East, a short chain is attached, and this ends in a ring; through the ring a strong stake is driven securely into the ground, and by this means the captive is held until his hour arrives. Out West the same trap is used; but instead of pinning it to the ground, a long chain is attached, and the end of this chain is made fast around a log, with a "cold-shut" or split-ring, such as you put your pocket-keys on, and which can be fastened by hammering. As soon as the bear springs the trap, with either fore or hind feet, and so is fast, he begins to make things lively all around, slashing at the trees, biting at the trap, and dragging the log. This, of course, is an awkward customer to pull along, especially if it is made of part of a young, tough pine-tree, with the

branches left on. It leaves a trail that is easily followed. Sometimes the bear will take in the situation very soon, and set himself to demolish, not the trap, but the thing that makes the trap unendurable. I have myself seen a pine-tree some fourteen feet long and eight or nine inches in diameter, perfectly tough and green, so chewed up that there was not a piece of it left whole that would weigh five pounds. In this case we were able to trail the bear by the trap-chain, and killed him farther on. The best way to fix a trap is the simplest: Scoop a hollow by the carcass of a dead elk, and, drawing up a pine, fix the end of it firmly to the trap. The branches of the tree half cover the dead game, and can be easily so arranged that, naturally, the bear will have, for his convenience, to approach on the side where the trap is set. Some old grizzlies, however, are extraordinarily cunning; and though they cannot have had any extensive experience of traps, —for none have been taken into the West till the last five years or so, — seem to divine just where those dangerous hidden jaws lie, beneath the innocent brown pine-needles and bunch-grass. They will spring it again and again, and then feast to their hearts' content. One great fellow did this

three times at the same carcass; and as we could not induce him to come during daylight, we had reluctantly to give him up. After carefully examining the jaws of the trap, which each time held a few gray, coarse hairs, and such small traces of skin as you see on a horse's curry-comb, we came to the conclusion, and I think the correct one, that the old fellow deliberately sat down on the whole concern.

My first grizzly was trapped on the head-waters of the East Fork of the Yellowstone, within some few miles of a mountain called the Hoodoo. That country is now too well known and too much hunted to afford good sport; a blazed trail leads up to it from the park. Travellers who want to see an elk are almost invariably advised to go up there. It is a sort of jumping-off place. None of the park guides, I think I am correct in saying, know how to get out of it unless by returning as they came; at least they did not two or three years ago. In 1883 there was considerably more game in that region than can be found there now. Our party, the morning after getting into camp, separated; I went for sheep on the high ground, for there was plenty of sign, and my friend, taking an

Adirondack guide we had with us, hunted the lower woody slopes. Toward evening I got back to camp, pretty well tired, having killed a ewe, for we wanted meat; and presently the rest of the party came in, almost too breathless to speak. They had seen a drove of bears, so they said; five of them, "and," added the Adirondack guide, "two were big as buffaloes." He had never seen a buffalo, and drew on his imagination for their size. This was exciting with a vengeance. They reported any amount of bear-sign on the slopes leading to the river. It was just before dark that they had seen this aforesaid family, which, unfortunately, at once winded them, and so quickly tumbled down the ravine, as only bears can tumble, and were lost in the cañon. We were poorly off for bait, but killed some porcupine and half roasted them (under these circumstances, I would have my readers remember that porcupine emit a powerful odor); and to these delectable morsels we added parts of sheep. Still it was a very poor bait. Bear will not, as a usual thing, come to a small carcass. We waited and waited, day after day; all the sheep cleared out of the neighborhood; and we, not having at that time one good hunter in the party, could

not trail up any of the small, scattered bands of elk that kept, as they generally keep during the end of August, to the thick timber. Our grub gave out; our last morning came; and, save for that one brief moment, none of the party had ever seen a grizzly. All our impediments were stowed away, and nothing remained to pack but the forty-two pound traps. While the final tightening of the mules' *aparejos* was being done (we had a Government outfit on that trip), our guide rode off to see if the luck had turned. He was to fire one shot if the trap had been carried away. Fancy our feelings when, thirty minutes later, a single shot rang out on the early morning air. We made time to the ridge where the boys had seen the bear, and where the traps had been set fruitlessly for a week; and there, sure enough, he was—a fine fellow too. He could not have been fast more than half an hour, for he had not gone far, but was "making tracks," dragging a great log after him, when the hunter saw him; and in an hour or two, at that pace, would have been well on his way down the cañon. Soon as mankind came in sight he took in the situation, and began to roar and growl. A grizzly's roar

can be heard a long way in still weather. I must, in all truthfulness, say that that bear seemed to be thinking chiefly of his family. He made no charge; he wanted very badly to go home; and I ended his career with an express-bullet.

Not much sport in that, so it seems to me now. And yet, after longing and longing even to see a big bear, and never seeing him; after finding, sometimes, the ground near our camp all torn up overnight, as we used in 1868; after having had three bears cross the river I was fishing in, on Sunday morning (oh! charitable reader, a quiet little stroll by a silver, purling, singing mountain stream, such as was Shell Creek, could not offend even the shade of Izaak Walton, though it were taken on Sunday) — yes, I went down that stream not more than three miles, and in the two or three hours I spent in filling my pockets with the trout, no less than three bears, good-sized bears, too, by their tracks, crossed that stream behind me and between me and camp — after such a long time of probation, it was more than exciting to see, here then, at last, the real thing, an unmistakable grizzly. There actually was such a thing as a grizzly in the flesh! We had begun



The Slaughter of Buffalo. (From Photograph.)

to doubt it; not so big as a buffalo, truly, now I came to see him in daylight, but weighing, I should say, fully six hundred pounds.

As to bears' weights, I confess myself sceptical about the existence of a bear in the Rocky Mountains, this side of California (I cannot say anything about California grizzlies), weighing over one thousand pounds. Colonel Pigot, the most noted

bear-hunter in the West, who has claimed royalty, I understand, on seventy grizzlies, thinks he never killed any over that weight. I understand, from one of the men who accompanied Colonel Pigot, that he carries a steelyard that weighs up to three hundred and fifty pounds, and by this means has obtained an idea, and a fairly accurate one, of the weight of some of his largest trophies. My prize animal, killed last year, measured nine feet three inches from his nose to his heels, and certainly, though in good condition, did not go over nine hundred pounds. My hunter thinks he has never seen one weighing more than a thousand; and he has killed as many bears as most men — outside of story-books.

The largest bear any of us ever saw was a cinnamon that came within an inch of killing one of my men, a good hunter and first-class guide — Charles Huff. (I may refer to the big cinnamon, too, as an instance of the danger that sometimes attends trapping the bear.) He had set his traps near Sunlight, in the spring, and was unable to visit them for a week. When he got to the bait, trap and log were gone. After taking up the trail, he soon found the remnants of his log chewed to matchwood; the bear, evidently a large one, had

gone off with the trap. He followed his trail as long as he had light, but found nothing, and had to return to camp. Next day, very foolishly, he took the trail again alone, beginning where he had left off. After a long march he came to the steep side of a hill; the bear had evidently gone up there; on the soft, snow-sodden ground the trail was plain. Just as he was beginning to ascend, there was a rush and a roar, and the bear was on him. He had no time to put his repeater to his shoulder, but letting it fall between his hands, pulled the trigger. The bear was within a few feet of him, and by a great chance the unaimed bullet took him between the eyes. He had evidently tried the hillside, and, worried by the heavy trap, had come back on his trail and lain behind a great heap of dirt, into which he had partly burrowed, waiting for his enemy. Among the débris of spring-tide — fallen stones and uprooted trees — a bear could easily lie hidden, if he was mad, and wanted to conceal himself till the enemy was within a few feet. It was a terribly close shave.

All animals are at times strangely hard to kill; this, I fancy, is especially true of the grizzly. Again and again he will drop to a well-planted shot, as will any animal;

nothing that runs can stand up long after it has received a quartering shot — *i.e.*, when the bullet is planted rather well back in the ribs, about half way up, and ranges forward to the opposite shoulder. Such a shot, especially if the bullet is a fifty-calibre, will drop anything; but the point of the heart may be pierced, or even the lungs cut, and bears will often fight.

We stalked two grizzlies in the "open" one evening. They were busy turning over stones, in order to get the grubs and worms underneath, and when we managed to get, unseen, within forty yards, at first fire each received a bullet broadside behind the shoulder; but, seemingly none the worse, they both turned down-hill, as bears will when wounded, nine times out of ten, and made for the ravine, whence they had evidently come. This gave me a nice open shot as they passed, and No. 1 rolled over dead; not so No. 2. Before he got a hundred yards away I hit him three times. My rifle was a fifty-calibre Bullard repeater, the one I have used for years — one hundred grains of powder and a solid ball. At the fourth shot he fell all of a heap, seemingly dead. To save trouble we laid hold of the first one, which lay about seventy yards above the second, and

dragged him down the steep incline to where this second lay, for convenience in skinning. We got within a few feet of the bear, when up he jumped, and, on one hind leg and one fore, went for Frank. The attack was tremendously unexpected and sudden. At a glance you could see that the poor, plucky brute was past hurting anyone; for one arm was smashed, and his lower jaw was shot almost completely away. Yet I tell the simple truth when I say that for a few strides he actually caught up to Frank, who made most admirable time; then he suddenly fell dead. We examined that bear carefully; he was a small one, not weighing more than two hundred pounds, and was shot all to pieces. Each of the five bullets I had fired had struck him; one hip and one forearm were broken, the lower jaw shot away; there was one shot in the neck, and one, through and through, behind the shoulder. It is never safe to fool with a grizzly; he may run away as fast as an elk, or he may not. He may drop to the first well-planted bullet, or he may stand up till blown almost to pieces.

I have used almost all sorts of rifles, and have satisfied myself that a good repeater is *the* arm, — more accurate than

an express, hitting hard enough to kill anything, and having nine shots instead of two. Very little observation or reading will satisfy any one that the habits of game change considerably in a comparatively brief space of time. This is true of the grizzlies. Allowing for old hunters' exaggeration, and again allowing for the natural growth of the mythical, even in so far as it relates to *Ursus horribilis*, yet I think the modern grizzly is a more timid animal than his grandfather could have been. I have said it is not safe to depend on one of these animals retreating; but unless wounded, if a path of retreat is left him, he will almost invariably take it. In the evening, on a trail, old hunters say that he often shows fight sooner than get out of the way. I have only once met a large bear alone in the evening; and on that occasion I did not wait to watch his movements, but fortunately rolled him over, hitting him in the heart with a snap shot.

The common idea still is that, in the fall, bears go down the mountains after berries. Some, I suppose, do; whether it is owing to the occupation of the river and creek beds (the usual place where choke-cherries and plums grow thickest) by cattle or not, I cannot say, but certainly

the biggest do not seem to go down at all. They live on grubs, and more especially on pine-nuts, breaking up the stores which that pretty and provident little fellow, the mountain squirrel, has laid by; and on his labor they grow very fat.

There is something to me beyond measure fascinating in hunting the grizzly, the hardest of all animals to approach, excepting perhaps the sheep; and the extreme difficulty of seeing him or finding him in the daylight, and the lonely haunts he has now retired to, make him more difficult to bring to bag than even the sheep. None seems in better keeping with his surroundings than he. It must be a poor, shallow nature that cannot enjoy the absolute stillness and perfect beauty of such evenings as the hunter must sometimes pass alone, when watching near a bait for bear.

One such experience I have especially in mind. What an evening it was, both for its beauty and its good-fortune! I think of it still as a red-letter day, and speak of it as

> "One from many singled out,
> One of those heavenly days that cannot die."

More than two thousand feet below, the head-waters of the Snake gather them-

selves, and in its infancy the great river sends up its baby murmur. Behind me, the giant heads of the Teton cut the rosy evening sky, sharp and clear, as does the last thousand feet of the Matterhorn. I was comfortably ensconced in the warm, brown pine-needles that smothered up the great knees of a gnarled nut-pine, whose roots offered me an arm-chair, and round me, for the space of two or three acres, the short, crisp greensward, that is only found where snow has lain for months previously, was spangled and starred all over with such blue and white and red mountain flowers as are nowhere else seen in this land.

I wish I had time and skill to write of those sweet mountain flowers; there is nothing quite so beautiful in any other Alpine land I know of, our mountains altogether outstripping the Swiss or Austrian Alps in the wealth, variety, and sweetness of their flora. I don't know anything of botany, I am ashamed to say; but we have counted wellnigh a hundred different flowers in bloom during one afternoon's tramp. Amid the lush green of the rich valleys great masses of harebell and borage and gentian carpet the ground. Here and there, beautifully contrasting with their



Black-tail Deer.

fresh, vivid blue, wide plots of yellow, purple-centred sunflowers stoutly hold up their heads; while on the border-land of these flower-beds of nature, where the grass shortens in blade, and deepens to an intense shade of green, the delicate mountain lily, with its three pure-white petals, fading to the tenderest green at the centre, reaches its graceful height of some nine inches. All this one has abundant leisure to observe, as he sits well to windward, by

the way, of the bait, — in this case a dead elk.

On this occasion I occupied an unusually good point of vantage. My armchair not only commanded a little sloping prairie, but the heads of two deep ravines leading to it, and the crest of the ridge, some three hundred feet above me, to my left. Hour after hour passed peacefully by. I tried to read Tennyson (I had a pocket volume with me), with but poor success, and so gave myself up to the beauty of the scene. I realized, without effort, what a blissful thing it might be — nay, sometimes is — simply to exist. Such hours do not come to any of us often; but when they do, with them surely may come an overmastering sense of that great truth Elizabeth Barrett Browning so tersely puts —

> "Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God;
> But only he who sees takes off his shoes."

Without cant, I trust, that evening I took off mine, as the old prayer came to mind: "We thank Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life."

I was in a state of stable equilibrium, bodily and mentally (if it ever is given to

a rector of a New York church so to be), when a mighty rumpus arose from the edge of the dark woods where our horses were lariatted, two or three hundred yards below. On his way upward, a big grizzly had been joined by a relative or acquaintance (history will never say which); and, as ill-luck would have it, they both came suddenly on the horses, hidden and securely tied in a little hollow. From where I sat I could see nothing; but running down a few yards I came in sight of two sturdy fellows surveying our plunging nags, as for one moment they evidently held a hurried consultation. The conclusion they arrived at was that they were out for venison, not for horse-flesh, especially when there was more than a suspicion of a dangerous smell around; in brief, they struck our trail, and scented the saddle, and so in an instant were off. Of course, we had settled on a spot toward which the wind blew from the ravine (Frank was a quarter of a mile away on the other side of the prairie); for bears almost always come up at evening from the deepest hiding-places; and these bears ran off, quartering upwind, giving me a long, running shot, as they made great time among the tall, rank grass and flowers.

Sit down when you shoot, if it is possible. There is no better position than an elbow on either knee; you can shoot fast and straight, and the position is high enough to carry your head and rifle above small inequalities of the ground. I let drive and missed; shot too far ahead, I fancy. Always shoot too far ahead rather than too far behind. Nine times out of ten a bullet plumped in front of running game will halt it for a moment; and so now it turned out. The leader reared up for an instant, and the instant's pause was fatal. The next bullet took him fair in the centre of the chest. He had just time to give his solicitous companion a wipe with his paw, that would have come near wiping out a strong man, when he rolled over.

Bear No. 2 concluded he had an engagement somewhere else, and was settling down to a business-like gait when he, too, came to grief. There they lay, not fifty yards apart, — two in one evening, not so bad, — though in honesty it must be confessed that such shots were more than ordinarily lucky. Skinning a tough hide is a very trying bit of work, but how willingly was it undertaken! What time we made down the mountain, tying first our

trophies — heads left on — securely on the cow-saddles! What cannot a good broncho do when he wants to get back to the herd! For a couple of thousand feet we led the horses, and then fairly raced. What fun is a good scamper home when you have a stanch pony between your legs! The sure-footedness and hardiness of a well-trained pony are simply marvellous; give him his head, and if there is a ghost of a trail he will take it. Many an evening did we race home against time, determined to get over the three miles of twisted and fallen timber before the last glow vanished. Once out of the timber we could sober down, for all was plain sailing. Three or four miles more, — among old beaver-meadows, where every now and then we heard, loud almost as a pistol-shot, the beaver smite the water with his broad tail, as he went down into his own quiet, clear pool, — and the welcome blaze of the camp-fire promised rest, after refreshing and sufficient toil, as well as good companionship.

There is among Western men much controversy as to the various kinds of bears inhabiting our Western Alps; but the number of those who, from personal observation, are capable of forming an opinion,

is very small. In the first place, for all the sanguinary talk around the stove, there are not a great many men who have made a practice of hunting bears at all. One such incident as that which occurred two years ago in the Big Horn scares a good many. A poor fellow there came on a bear, a small cinnamon, feeding on an elk he had killed. He fired and wounded it; the bear retreated, and he followed. Coming up with it, again he fired, when the bear charged him. Trying to re-load (he used, I heard, a single-shot Sharp rifle), the extractor came off the empty shell, and, of course, he was defenceless. He evidently drew his knife, and used it desperately; for when they found him the bear lay near him, dead, with many knife-wounds in it, but it had killed him first. In short, both on account of the danger, and by reason of the great difficulty of seeing them, it scarcely pays to hunt bears alone.

There are comparatively few men, I say, whose opinion is worth much; and some of these seem to have an idea that, for the credit of the mountain land they love so well, they are bound to people it with as many different species of bears as they can. Now, as a matter of fact, I be-

lieve that almost all the bears ranging in the Rocky Mountains occasionally breed together; certainly brown and black sometimes do. Our party once shot a black bear with a large brown cross extending from the tail to the back of the head and down each shoulder. Just as certainly the brown and grizzly on occasions intermarry. My hunter assures me he has shot gray cubs with a brown sow. I may be wrong; but I cannot myself see any difference sufficiently marked to warrant the idea that the cinnamon bear of the Rockies is not the coarser, larger brown bear, the result of some crossing between the grizzly and the brown.

Then, some men insist that among the gray bears there are no less than three distinct varieties, — silvertip, roachback, and grizzly. As I have said before, I cannot say anything about the California grizzly, though I do not think, from skins I have examined, he differs materially from his neighbor of the mountains; but as to these differences of color indicating a distinct variety, I cannot believe it. We shot three bears, feeding on one carcass, last fall, all three years old, and evidently of the same litter, and you could scarcely find greater varieties of color than those they

represented. One was almost yellow, one a dark silvertip, and one almost brown. There is, among bears, a considerable variety in shape and outline sometimes; and back of the tusk, in the lower and upper jaws, some few grizzlies seem to have a lesser and second tusk instead of the usual molar; but this is a rarity, I fancy. I only found it twice, and our men could not remember having seen it before.

I will end this rambling paper as I began it. Why does this splendid Alpine region of ours, so rich in beauty and in all varieties of interest, attract so few? For a party of two or three, a trip of seven or eight weeks amid its solitudes need not cost each one more than many spend during a couple of months at some fashionable seaside resort.

To get competent guides is the chief difficulty. The men who can or will take an outfit through a mountainous country, where they have never been before, are few and far between; and the so-called certificated guides, numerous enough in the park, know little or nothing of the country beyond it. The charges, too, in the park for transport are excessive. Cooke City, Gallatin County, Montana, the mining-camp I have referred to, is the best place

I know for securing men. A railway will soon connect it with the Northern Pacific; and meanwhile, from June till December, a stage runs three times a week to the Mammoth Hot Springs. But some good hunters are still to be found at Billings and Bozeman on the Northern Pacific Railroad. On one of the most successful trips I ever made we had no guides at all. I steered the party by such aid as the map afforded. So long as we went slowly, sending one of the party forward, day by day, to hunt a trail, we did very well. We only got into one scrape that might have ended seriously, and that came from foolishly venturing down a cañon none of us had ever explored. Go slow; and go nowhere unless you are sure you can, at the worst, retrace your steps, and you will enjoy your trip.

Though a guide is not a necessity, a couple of first-class packers are. Any man, with some little experience of roughing it, can guide a party fairly well; but no mortal man, not to the manner born, can pack. No baby is more dependent on its mother than is the tenderfoot upon his packer. Day after day he stands, in wondering admiration, and sees this individual "throw" the marvellous diamond hitch-

knot that fastens, as nothing else can fasten, the strange assortment of everything, from a Dutch oven to a stag's head, that may chance to form the pack; and when he has mastered the secret of the diamond hitch, he is still years from being a thorough packer. To see all the *impedimenta* of a hunting-camp for a party of four travellers and their men quickly done up into the neatest and tightest packages imaginable, and then bound, as none but a Westerner can bind them, on the back of an ill-conditioned Indian pony, to stay there, as I have seen packs stay, all day long, with just one tightening up, as up and down we go over rocks and against trees, is a wonderful instance of skill and careful planning.

Some days, of course, the packs won't "ride;" sometimes the devil has completely mastered the natures of horse and mule, as long ago he did the pigs. We once started from Big Timber Station across a level and stony plain, at five o'clock sharp, on a sweltering August morning. By four that evening we had made precisely two and a half miles. I think the outfit's survival as an outfit on that occasion is due to the fact that the clear stream of the Bowlder (full of trout,

by the way) did not flow another quarter of a mile farther off from our starting-point than it did. I never had better packers or better animals than those we had for that trip; but we put too much on the mules. They were a splendid band, but had not been packed for two years, and so were soft and resented packing; and there just happened to be an evidence of advancing civilization, in the shape of half a mile of the newest and most barby barbed-wire fencing, midway between the railroad and the woody bend of the stream that was the goal of all our hopes. Against that half-mile of wire every one of those mules in turn lay down, stringing themselves well out, so that they would not be inconveniently close together, this manœuvre, of course, resulting in the rending and cutting of all that was cuttable about them, including their hides; and, in all honesty—for one must try to be honest even to a pack-mule—I must say, they rather seemed to like to have their hides cut, if they were only sure of cutting every flour, sugar, oatmeal, and coffee sack, to say nothing of letting daylight into waterproof, tarpaulin, clothes, etc.

It is something to have had an exhaustive experience of any sort; and after

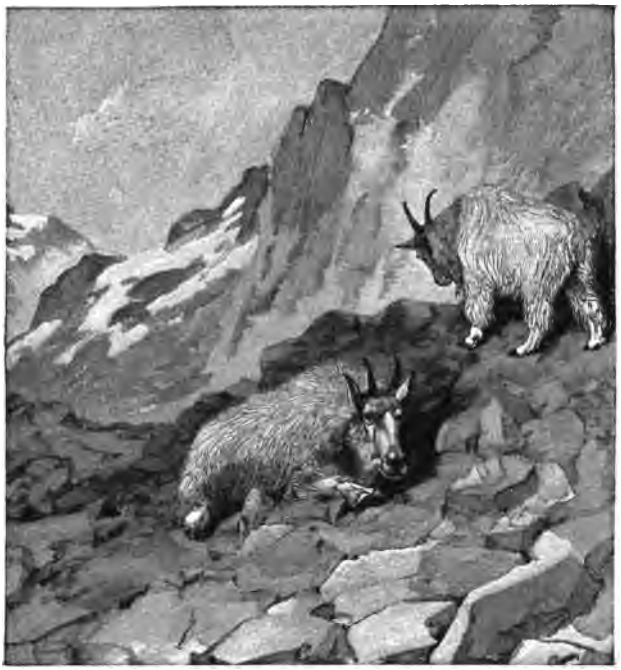
going through those eleven hours of unceasing toil, during which I had ample opportunity to see what a mule could do, and to hear how thoroughly trained mule-packers could express their sentiments regarding everything and every person in general, and those immediate mules and circumstances in particular, I have no hesitation in affirming that in both these directions my experience *is* exhaustive.

Dead-beat and almost dumb, one of the men, sitting on a newly prostrate mule's head, summed up the situation concisely as he said, glancing at me reproachfully, "It's enough to make a minister of the gospel swear;" and had I gone through half the poor fellow had endured, I have no doubt I should have agreed with him.



CLIMBING FOR WHITE GOATS

By George Bird Grinnell



The White Goat's Home.

THE white goat lives above timber line, among the rocks, along the narrow ledges, and in the fissures of towering precipices, by snow fields and glaciers. Really it is not a goat at all, but an antelope, — the analogue and not distant relative of the European chamois. It has horns and a beard; and for no better reason than this, the western Ameri-

can, with his faculty for seizing on any salient characteristic, has called it goat. So in the vernacular these animals, young and old, are billies, nannies, and kids, and will be so always.

This Alpine antelope is about the size of a sheep, and is remarkable in being white. Now, nothing is more conspicuous against the summer landscape than a patch of white. On the other hand, many birds and mammals inhabiting snow-clad regions have white plumage or fur, and are thus invisible at a little distance. The goat is one of the mammals thus protected. Its life is passed high up on lofty mountains, often among fields of ice and snow, or at least where snow remains in patches and drifts almost throughout the year. Amid such surroundings it is mere accident if a white animal is seen by the hunter.

The short, sharp, backward-directed horns, the stout hoofs, and the margins of the eyes and lips, are black. Young individuals have the long hair on the ridge of the back gray, which, perhaps, points back to ancestors which were not white, but were gray in color like a Japanese relative of this species.

The goat is an animal of the north;

yet since altitude often answers for latitude, so we sometimes find it far to the south of its usual range; for example, on Mount Whitney, in California, where goats are abundant, though none of their kind can be found for hundreds of miles to the north. Like certain Alpine butterflies, which occur each summer on Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, and are not found elsewhere south of Labrador, so on some isolated mountain-tops the goat has been cut off from the rest of his race, and still persists in little colonies living alone.

The goat likes regions of great precipitation, and is most abundant in the high mountains where much snow or rain falls. This explains its absence from the southern portion of the continental backbone. Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico have many peaks high enough to give it the temperature which it requires; but it is not found in those regions because of their aridity. The goat occurs abundantly in northwestern Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and all through the mountain ranges of the British possessions and Alaska, north toward the Arctic Ocean, where the mountains become lower and sink down to meet the sea-

shore. Besides this territory over which the species is generally distributed, there are a number of out-lying localities, like Mount Whitney, a peak or two in Colorado, and a few other points where white goats have been found.

For most of the year the animal wears a shaggy coat of long, coarse hair, beneath which lies a heavy under-fleece of white cotton-like wool of very fine texture. The long, coarse top-coat sheds the rain or the snow like a thatched roof, while the under coat is thus protected from the wet, and keeps the heat in and the cold out. Although the goat is generally a shaggy, rough-looking creature, yet in summer it sheds its coat, and for a time is almost as naked as a newly-shorn sheep. If it could be obtained in commercial quantities, the wool of the white goat would be valuable. Specimens which I furnished some years ago to Dr. Thomas Taylor, Microscopist of the Agricultural Department at Washington, were called by some wool experts fine Cashmere wool; by others, Australian fine; and by still others, fine wool from various foreign ports. Dr. Taylor pronounced the wool finer than Cashmere wool. In the mountains of British Columbia, excellent blan-

kets are woven from this wool by the Indians. The fleece is shaved from the hide with a sharp knife, and the yarn twisted by the women, who roll the wool under the hand on the bare knee. A simple loom is used for weaving; and the blankets made are not only thick, warm, and serviceable, but also sometimes very beautiful.

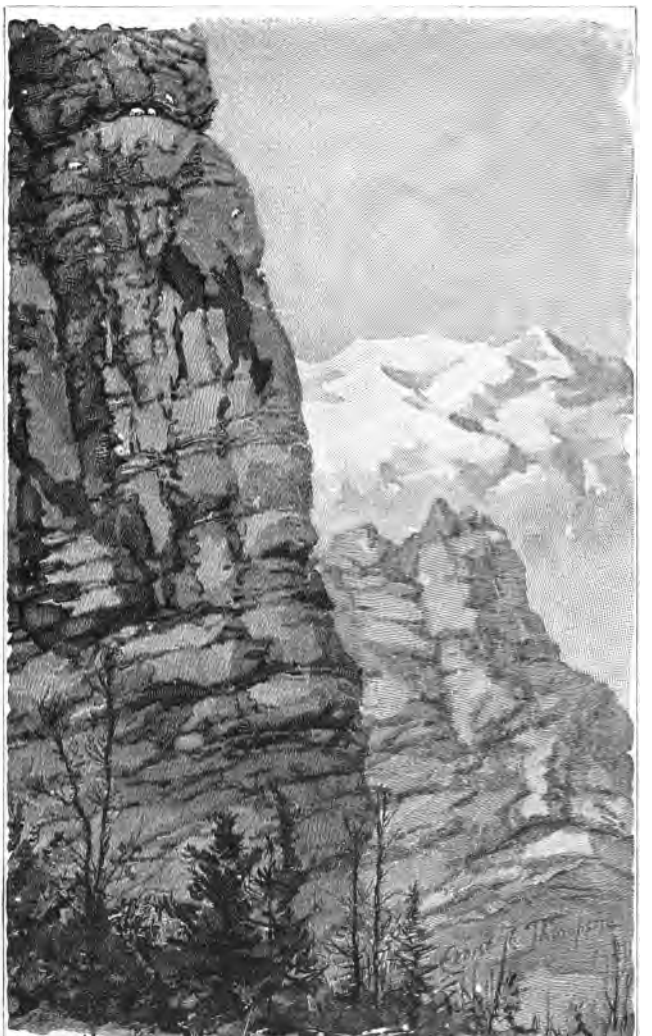
The white goat is occasionally captured alive. Full grown ones will not live in captivity, nor will captives survive when removed from their native mountains. Those taken as kids, however, become perfectly tame, wandering away to feed during the day, and at night returning to the house.

Although the goat is nearly related to the chamois, it has little of the activity of that nimble species. The bighorn is the runner and jumper of the Western mountains, while the goat is the plodder. He gets over the ground and climbs the loftiest peaks "by main strength and awkwardness." The bighorn rushes away along the mountain-side at a headlong pace, the alarmed goat starts straight for the mountain-top at a rate which seems slow, often no more than a walk, but which is so steady and continuous that it

soon carries the animal out of the way of danger. The goat does not very often run, nor does it often raise its head to look about it like a deer or a wild sheep. Usually, even after being shot at, it holds its head low, and seems to regard one from beneath its eyebrows. When at last convinced that there is danger, it moves off, either slowly pulling itself up over the rocks, or if the way is level, going with a swinging, sidelong gait, which reminds one of a pacing dog.

But the goat does not always run away. Sometimes, in its simplicity, it turns to fight. An acquaintance of mine who discovered one lying under a shelf of rock took his hunting companion above it and up to within fifteen or twenty yards of it, and then, by throwing stones at it, attempted to drive the game out to where the hunter could see it. To his astonishment, the animal bristled up in fury and was advancing as if to attack him, when the hunter shot it. The male goats are quite pugnacious among themselves, and often those killed bear evidence of severe battles which they have had with others of their kind.

The goat is marvellously sure-footed, and from the day of its birth, is practised



The White Goat's Pasture.

in climbing over the rocks; but it must not be imagined that it never falls from the insecure perches which it frequents. Such falls are not uncommon, but seem rarely to result in serious injury. Kids which have been captured when very young and kept in captivity have been observed to play at rolling down steep banks, repeating the tumble over and over again, as if practising for the falls which they might be obliged to take later in life.

The spurious hoofs, or dew-claws, of the goat, while not strictly functional, are yet of great assistance to it in climbing about among the rocks, and especially in going down hill. These hooflets are large, and catch on the ground without yielding, acting as brakes, relieving the direct strain on the middle toes of the foot. The dew-claws almost always show considerable wear against the rocks.

Hunting the goat is man's work, and to follow the game to its home among the rocks calls for the best qualities of the mountaineer. Muscle, nerve, and experience in mountain climbing are needed by the goat hunter; for the labor of reaching the animal's home is extremely arduous. In some sections it is possible to

ride a horse up to the game's feeding-ground, but usually much hard foot-work must be done before the hunting-ground can be reached. When the goats have once been found, however, it is usually easy to secure them, for they are gentle and unsuspicious.

A year or two since, I was hunting in the Rocky Mountains with a friend who had never shot a goat, and I was extremely anxious that he should secure one. Besides that, there was no fresh meat in camp, so we had a double motive for hard work. Starting from the lodge one morning with the rising sun, we crossed the stream, and set our faces against the great mountain that stood before us.

First above the valley's level we were confronted by the talus, above that by a thousand feet of cliff, and then by other slide-rock and more cliffs, in all nearly five thousand feet, if we could climb so far. The slope at the foot of the cliff was perhaps fifteen hundred feet high; a mass of small rock fragments, rather firmly compacted with earth and vegetation, that lay at an angle of nearly forty-five degrees, so that the climbing was extremely steep and slow. After working

our way nearly to the top of this talus, we found running along it, under the cliff, a game trail; and we followed this, knowing that it would take us to some point where the precipice which overhung us could be climbed. The trail worked higher up on the talus, and led us to a break in the cliff, where there were some fissured ledges, which promised an ascent for a few hundred feet at least. Everywhere the path showed signs of abundant use; the angles of the rock were worn and rounded by the passing of many hoofs, and no plants grew in the scanty soil in the crevices. The climbing soon became hand-over-hand work; one man standing on a ledge and holding the rifles, while the other went up six or eight feet and then took the guns from his companion, who now in his turn drew himself up over the ledges. As we proceeded, the climbing grew more difficult; and it was hard to understand how any animal, unprovided with hands or wings, could have ascended. Often the ledges on which our feet rested were only two or three inches wide; and sometimes there were no ledges, and we worked ourselves up the face of the wall, clinging with tenacious grip to projections hardly large

enough to support the finger-tips, our feet resting on little roughnesses in the rock which barely supported the toe. Some of the work was trying to the nerves; but at length we had passed the worst places, and reached a narrow fissure where the ascent was easier.

After a brief pause for a restful pipe, we resumed our climb, and before very long came out on the crest of the great shoulder we had been ascending. From this we looked out over a narrow alpine valley, beyond which, steep rock-slides and frowning walls rose to a great height; and just across the valley, and half way up the slide, was seen a white patch, which could only be a goat. The stream-bed was a little below us; and the trees which grew in the valley furnished good cover for stalking the game, which, however, was as yet too far from the timber for a certain shot. The wind favored us, for it blew up the valley. We waited a little to see what the animal would do; and soon it began to walk slowly up the slide, stopping now and then to feed, and then moving on again. In a few moments it had passed behind some tree-tops, and we hurried down into the edge of the timber. The valley was only about half a

mile long, and ended in a high cliff, over which the stream poured. If hunted and hunters kept along on their respective sides, they would come together at its head. Hidden by the trees, we went on, timing our advance by the goat's progress; and at length, when we reached the end of the valley, the animal was on the slide-rock above us, and only eighty yards distant.

Soon the shot rang out. The goat gave a bound, and began to scramble along the slide-rock toward the cliff. Another shot sounded, and then another, the animal climbing all the time; but at the foot of a high ledge it stopped, too weak to surmount it. It turned, and for a few seconds stood with lowered head looking at us; then it reeled, its legs seemed to give way, and it fell, slipping, sliding, and bounding down the cliff's face and on to the rocks below, and there turning over and over, it rolled down to us. The work of preparing our loads of meat for transportation to camp occupied some time, so that before we were ready to go the sun had long been hidden behind the high peaks that flanked the narrow valley.

Trying to make a short cut by following down the stream, instead of returning

as we had come, we soon found ourselves among ledges that could not be descended; and it took five hours of hard climbing and walking — much of it in the dark — down ledges, among fallen timber, and through swamps, before we saw the light of the fire flickering through the lodge covering.

A week later, we climbed through the snow to the crest of another mountain to make some notes on the geography of the region. After we had taken our observations, one of the party called attention to a little spot of white in the shadow of a great rock below us; and looking at it through the field-glasses, it was seen to be a goat.

We approached very cautiously from above, keeping the rock between it and ourselves, and tiptoeing along as quietly as possible over the clinking shale. When we were within perhaps ten yards of the rock, the goat walked from under it on my friend's side. He fired once, again, and again. The goat was mortally hurt, but at first it kept its feet and ran. The mountain side was steep, and just below it was a gulf two thousand feet deep. It fell, rolled over, came to its feet again, and tried to stop. In vain; with staring



Head of Male White Goat.

eyes it looked toward the brink before it, holding back with all its might, bracing itself with stiffened outstretched legs, while still it slipped and slid onward toward the verge of the cliff, and we watched it with hearts full of pity now, although — so full is man of contradic-

tions — we had felt no pity when the bullets struck it. A moment more, and it had reached the brink and disappeared, and still I waited and watched, listening and looking for I knew not what, half fascinated by the pitifulness of the sight; and then, half a mile down the valley, I saw floating along on the wings of the gale a tuft of white hair as large as my hand, torn from its hide by some crag against which it struck as it whirled down into the abyss.

But the killing of the game is a mere incident of this climbing for goats. The perfect freedom of the mountain life is one of its greatest charms, but far beyond that is the joy which comes of the surroundings. The lofty mountains uplift the soul, and one lives in a mental atmosphere above that of his every-day life. By night he sleeps beneath the wind-swept pines which sigh his lullaby; by day he pushes his way far above timber line over the naked rocks and among the crags. His companions are the changeless peaks, the far-reaching snow-fields, and the blue ice rivers. The voices that speak to him are the hoarse brawling of the mountain torrents, the shrill scream of the winds throwing themselves against the peaks,

the thundering report of the moving glaciers, or the long-drawn roar of the snow slides. From lofty pinnacles he looks down on mountains and valleys and lakes far below him, and is thrilled by feelings which he cannot put in words. The very air he breathes is instinct with the solemn spirit of the mountains, and he is awed by its inscrutable mysteries.

Moved by emotions which he but half comprehends, he rejoices in each varying aspect of the scene, whether the change be a smile or a frown. After the dark shadow of a moving cloud has passed, the sun shines more brightly; the bitter wind that half freezes him does not seem unkind; he welcomes the blinding snowstorm, or the cold mist that sweeps along the mountain side, shrouding peak after peak, blotting out point after point, till at last it has hidden all the view, and has wrapped him in its chilling embrace. On these heights he exults alike in sunshine and in storm; for here he has found nature, pure and untouched, and for the time has become a part of it.

SPORT IN AN UNTOUCHED AMERICAN WILDERNESS

By Frederick Irland



MOST of the great solitude which two hundred years ago constituted the peninsula of Acadia is as undisturbed by civilized men as it was when British ships carried the French settlers away from its border. The interior has never been definitely surveyed or adequately mapped.

In the United States we have seen the forests melt away like snow in an April wind, and have come to look upon them as merely transitory; so that it is difficult for Americans to realize the extent to which, in the region of earliest European occupation of Canada, primeval conditions

endure. In the immediate presence of a civilization more than two hundred years old, the wilderness of the Maritime Provinces preserves its perpetual youth, sheltering, in undiminished numbers, its royal inhabitants, — the moose, the caribou, the black bear, the partridge, the salmon, and the trout. Nowhere on this continent can be found a more striking example of forest persistence than in the region east of the State of Maine, between the Atlantic Ocean on the south and the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the north. The interior of this peninsula is almost entirely undisturbed. The few who have penetrated its depths have found it a veritable land of enchantment.

On an afternoon early in September I was sitting in the writing-room at Young's Hotel, in Boston, awaiting the arrival by express of an extra heavy rifle which had been made to order. At six o'clock that evening I took the cars for Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick, which has been well described as "the quietest city of its size north of the Potomac;" and at noon the next day entered the woods, which extend, with scarcely a break, hundreds of miles up to the Arctic limit of timber.

For, though the New Brunswick capital has for many years been a centre of education and refinement, you could today fire a long-range rifle-bullet from the dome of the parliament building into the edge of the forest which stretches away to the north, broken only by the St. Lawrence. The deer wander within an hour's walk of the ancient city; and on the smooth road that makes off to the upper St. John River settlements you may see the partridges run into the brush, within a mile of town. The birds are more innocent than those we know. Ten miles from Fredericton, if you meet a Canada grouse, it will fly unconcernedly up to the nearest branch, from which perch of fancied security it will gaze curiously down upon you, while you cut a slender sapling, attach a looped string to the small end, slowly move it right up to the bird's beak, drop the noose over its neck, and with a slight jerk pull the trusting creature down, fluttering but unhurt. A barnyard hen would be far more sophisticated.

There is a little railroad which runs from Fredericton to Chatham, along the valley of the Southwest Miramichi River. It possesses two locomotives, each making a daily run of one hundred and ten miles



Writing Home.

and return. One summer a circus wandered up into that country, exhibiting at St. John, Chatham, and Fredericton. It took one of the locomotives to haul the circus train, and so for two days the regular business of the road was abandoned.

At one of the intermediate stations you may leave the train, cross the river, pass two or three farms, and then plunge into a stunted forest broken only by barrens, beaver meadows, broad lakes, and lofty mountains. A few miles back the last vestige of a road disappears; and if you are fortunate enough to have the services of a guide who knows the woods, he can conduct you, by much walking, into a land of surprises. Very few, indeed, are the men who have ever seen the tranquil beauty of

those lovely solitudes. There is a mellowness about the mountain scenery which makes the purple granite peaks seem in the distance like immense heaps of the ripe blueberries with which they are covered, and the autumnal foliage is unequalled in brilliancy.

The larger and less known portion of this wilderness lies between the Restigouche River on the north, the Intercolonial Railway, paralleling the seacoast on the east; the Southwest Miramichi River on the south, and the St. John River on the west, within the extensive counties of Northumberland, York, Carleton, Victoria, Madawaska, and Restigouche. The least accessible portion is about the headwaters of the streams which ultimately form the Miramichi, Nepisiguit, and Tobique Rivers. These streams rise in an unmapped mountainous tract, which, though as beautiful as the Adirondack region, is not penetrated by half a dozen tourists in a season. The reason for this delightful neglect is a commercial one. There is practically no pine timber. Plenty of trees grow; but they are birches, firs, small spruces, and others not attractive to the lumberman. The land, if cleared, would not be good for farming purposes. This is why the

game-trails around the lakes, across the barrens, and through the thickets, grow deeper year by year, trodden as they have been by countless generations of animals. On the day when the Hebrew psalmist was singing, "Every beast of the forest is mine," that very day the moose and caribou at sunset came down to the shores of the lonely lakes behind those mountains, just as other moose and caribou will come to-night.

I have spent two seasons in the very centre of this wilderness. From Fredericton, by the railroad of two locomotives, ambitiously called the Canada Eastern, it is three hours' ride — the distance is forty miles — to Boiestown. There, thanks to arrangements made by a friend in Fredericton, my companion and myself were met by Henry Braithwaite, of Stanley, one of the very few guides who know how to reach the heart of the interior. A wagon carried our tent and outfit five miles. Then we were at the very last house, and there everything was loaded upon a sled with wide wooden runners. Two horses struggled with this load, urged on by a teamster whose profanity was a household word in the settled portion of that valley. For twenty-five miles, over roots, fallen



An Old Camp

trees, and bare ground, this summer sled proceeded; and then, where the decayed lumber road ended, and the country became very rough, we said good-by to the old teamster, and for fifty-seven days we did not see a human face, nor the smoke of another fire; nor did we hear the sound of a rifle-shot, except our own. The rest of the journey to Little Southwest Lake, sixty miles away, was made on foot — as indeed the whole journey from Boiestown had been, after the first five miles. There was no road. The experienced Braith-

waite led us on and on, across boggy barrens, through thick swamps, where occasional axe-marks on the trees were the only street signs he needed, up steep mountain-sides, and along the shores of unnamed lakes. We went in expecting to remain three weeks. When we had been gone about nine weeks, and two feet of snow had fallen, our friends in the United States began telegraphing to the Boiestown station agent to hunt us up regardless of expense. He could not find a man in all the settlement who knew the way beyond the Dungarvon River, where the team had turned back. This detail is mentioned for the purpose of demonstrating that the large game with which that wilderness abounds is practically unhunted.

During the nine weeks of our absence, were we lost and starving? No! We were having the pleasantest time of all our lives, and we fared sumptuously every day. It was an experience to make one feel that civilization does not matter much, and that our savage ancestors had rather the best of it. When heavy snow came unexpectedly early in November, the guide and cook built a thirty-foot dugout in a week, hewing it out of a big hermit pine, dragged the craft a mile over the snow to



A Salmon Jumping.

a stream; and after a five days' run, over rapids and around cataracts, we came out on the other side of the Province. The first man we met on the lower river sang out, "Hello, Braithwaite! is that you? They're offering fifty dollars to the man who will go into Little Southwest country to hunt you up, and nobody will take it." News of the delayed travellers had spread all over the country.

This article is not intended as a chronicle of game slaughter. No idea of that region is complete, however, which does not impress the constant presence of the

moose-track. The borders of the lakes, the mossy barrens, the deep woods, all the places where hoof-prints can be made, are full of impressions of the tireless feet of moose and caribou. The New Brunswick law allows a man to kill only two moose and three caribou in a season, and only one moose for each member of a party of three or more. If one is any kind of a shot he can be pretty sure of at least one chance at a moose, especially if his guide is a good "caller." It is in this respect that Mr. Braithwaite is above every other New Brunswick guide. He is, in his way, the musical peer of Ysaye or Paderewski; and his solo instrument is the birch-bark horn.

The future of the moose, oldest and noblest of the game animals on this continent, is a matter that has interested a good many people. Mr. Braithwaite, who has lived among these animals all his life, says there is no danger of their diminution in New Brunswick. They shed their antlers before the snow becomes deep in winter, and the sportsman who endeavors to carry away a hornless moose is always roughly dealt with by the magistrates down in the settlements. The only relentless enemy of the moose is the lumberman, who in the

depth of winter can make good use of the meat. But in the region which is the subject of this article, there is little lumber, and so there are few lumbermen. The degenerate Indians of the villages seldom trouble themselves to hunt, and the few moose killed by hunters are as nothing compared with the young ones destroyed by the bears. Bruin gets trapped, because his coat will average twenty dollars to his



The Boy and the Moose-Head.

captor. There are no wolves in this wilderness; so the prospects for the moose are getting better instead of worse. And if

there are thousands of moose, there are tens of thousands of caribou.

The males of both species, about the time of the first full moon in October, will come to the deceitful music of the hunter's birch-bark horn. But the imitation of the cow's call must be very clever, or it will not succeed; and so very few moose are shot in this way. The distance at which the real moose-call can be heard is something wonderful. I have heard it echoing over a lake at least five miles across. But the hunter who, on a perfectly still evening, can provoke a response from the hills a mile away, is an artist; and probably there are not three men in all New Brunswick who can do it well.

The horn with which the calling is done is very simple in its construction. The guide can in five minutes at any time find a suitable birch-tree, from which he cuts a sheet of bark about fifteen inches square. This he rolls up in the form of a cornucopia, making the aperture at the small end about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and at the larger end about four inches. A tough spruce root, which can be pulled from the ground almost anywhere, furnishes a string with which to tie the horn so that



*Lively Running.**

it will retain its shape. When the larger end is trimmed, the horn is ready for business.

So charming a place did I find the modern Acadia in 1894, that again in 1895, with the same guide, a cook, and a single companion, I spent the greater part of the summer and fall among the mountains and lakes, fishing a little, shooting a little, and resting a great deal. If life on earth had no more for me, I should

* There are fifty miles like this on the Little Southwest Miramichi.

feel that the recollections of those two seasons in the New Brunswick woods had made it worth living.

For the sake of communication with the outside world, we employed a special mail-carrier, who made the round trip to the railroad station and return about once in ten days. We would tell him each time about where our camp should be; and when he struck the stream on which we were temporarily located, he would travel up or down along the banks until he found us. There were no other people within many miles of us; and if he saw human footprints on a sandbar, or axe-marks on a tree, he knew that we had made them, and were in the immediate vicinity. The ease with which he found us on every occasion, travelling through the woods as he did where there were no roads, was one of the most clever feats of woodcraft that I have ever seen.

The wealth of animal life in those woods was constantly forced upon our attention. Impudent moose-birds would alight on our improvised dinner-table, and the red squirrels and white-bellied mice quarrelled for the fallen crumbs, while after nightfall the chattering martens would shriek out their cat-like disputes

over the fish-heads in the rear of the camp. Often we heard the short, coughing bark of the fox in the still hours of the night. In the farther depths of the wilderness we saw the beaver's logging operations and river improvements still carried on. At one place we found a beaver-house so big and strong that a bull-moose had walked up on it, and from the top pawed defiance, yet his great weight had not broken the structure down.



Calling Moose.

A most impressive exhibit of the terrific energy of the angered moose was written on a bushy mountain-side. Two bulls had met and fought. The record of the conflict was plain to all comers. A great swath had been torn down the mountain for half a mile, the uprooted bushes bearing scattered tufts of hair. In some places both moose had slid for several yards. Then there was the evidence of a complete somersault, and finally it was plain that both had run against a dead

pine-stub, and knocked it down. One of the moose had dragged the end of it on his back for twenty feet; for the broken lower end, next the stump, had been carried up hill. The fight had ended right there. Two moose-tracks, in opposite directions, told of the retreat of the rival woodland monarchs.

Never can a man forget his first sight of a bull-moose in the woods. Mine came in this way: Mr. Braithwaite and I had tramped the country for a week; but while there were tracks everywhere, and we had heard several moose calling, we had only caught a momentary glimpse of one bull. In the presence of so many superior attractions, Braithwaite's musical performances had been scorned by the gentlemen moose. One evening the baffled guide, in talking the matter over before the camp-fire, said: "There is a lake about three miles back here in the mountains that I have had in my mind for ten years as a likely place to call a moose. To-morrow we will try it."

It should be explained that the bull-moose comes much more readily to the call after dark. All the Indians who attempt calling do so at night. The difficulty about this method is, that while the



Modern Acadian Travelling.

moose may come very near the sportsman, the latter cannot see his intended victim; and the result is, that four moose are wounded and lost for every one that is killed on the spot after dark. Braithwaite never calls at night, but trusts to his ability to outwit the moose in broad daylight.

When the guide uttered the remark above quoted we were camped on Little Southwest Lake, a body of water about four miles long. Getting into the canoe the next morning, we paddled up to the head

of the lake. On the way up we saw, half a mile away on the shore, the huge, ungainly shape of a cow-moose, swinging clumsily along close to the water's edge. She remained in sight for fully ten minutes, and then leisurely disappeared in the thicket.

Arrived at the head of the large lake, it was a good three hours' task to climb the mountain, and penetrate the dense thickets of spruce and cedar which barred the approach to the small lake of which we were in search. At last we saw the welcome gleam of water through the trees, and pushed on to the brink. A great flock of black ducks rose quacking from the surface, and in three minutes had crossed over to the larger body of water which it had taken us so many toilsome hours to leave behind. We sat for a few minutes in the bright October sunshine, with our legs dangling over the steep bank, carefully scanning every bush and rock and stub around the shore. There was no ripple on the water. Around us rose the mountain-sides, resplendent in their autumnal attire. The repose of the wilderness was over everything. One would have thought there was not a living creature within hearing.

Placing the birch-bark horn to his lips, the guide gave the long, wailing bellow of the cow-moose, not loud, but in the same coaxing tone which characterized the genuine article, as we had heard it vibrating in the evening air two or three days before. The echoes had not died away when, across the narrow water, from a thicket nearly opposite us, came the never-to-be-forgotten hoarse grunt of a bull, repeated every few seconds as the animal rushed toward the water's edge. In less than a minute we caught sight of his broad antlers, glistening in the sun, as he pushed impatiently through the thick branches. Then he broke through the bushes; and as he stood by the water's edge, intently looking and listening, his head thrown high in the air, it seemed to me that he appeared ten feet tall.

It was as easy a shot as one could ask for. Any kind of a marksman could hit a man's hat at that distance, and the animal's black bulk stood out against the rifle sight as big as the front door of a house. One glance was enough; and at the report of the heavy rifle the moose wheeled suddenly about, and plunged along the shore of the lake for fully fifty yards. While he was covering that distance I fired four



A Load of Antlers.

times more, emptying the magazine of the rifle. Then the moose rushed up the bank, and disappeared in the forest.

Five minutes later two panting and wild-eyed men, splashed with mud and water, had run clear around the head of the little lake, and reached the point where the moose first appeared.

"Do you think I hit him?" I anxiously inquired.

"Yes, I think you broke his leg," responded the guide; "but it may be an all-day chase to catch up with him."

Full of anxiety over the uncertainty of the result, I climbed directly up the bank, while Braithwaite followed the more circuitous trail through the bushes. I had

not gone fifty feet when, in a little opening in the balsams and spruces, I suddenly came upon the moose, standing rigid among the bushes, within fifteen feet of me. The bristles stood a foot high on his shoulders; his threatening antlers could easily accommodate two men about the size of those in his immediate vicinity, and he was not a pleasant sight to see. But he was in more danger than I was; for the instant I saw him the rifle again spoke, and the poor brute fell crashing to the ground. Four of the bullets had struck him, all in the vicinity of the breast and shoulder, and two had gone clean through him.

The following year, under somewhat similar circumstances, a single bullet killed another moose in his tracks.

Our second hunting-trip, in the fall of 1895, was in the Bald Mountains, considerably farther north. In this region there are fewer moose, but more caribou. It is considerably easier of access than the Little Southwest Lake country. One can either go up the Nepisiguit River from Bathurst, or up the Northwest Miramichi from Newcastle. If he goes up the latter stream he cannot use a birch-bark canoe, on account of the extreme roughness of the

upper waters. In order to reach the limit of navigation, the canoemen will be compelled to drag the boat over many miles of shallow bars, wading in the cold water. This they cheerfully do, however, for a dollar and a quarter per day.

For us, the passengers, there was nothing but comfort. My companion on this trip was a slender boy of fourteen, who had never before been outside of the brick walls of a city, and who had never seen anything wilder than an English sparrow, except in the cages of the zoölogical garden. Some of his friends who did not know about such things thought it a foolhardy thing to let him go into the wilderness, a hundred miles from anywhere. They did not know what a luxurious place it is. On the way into the hunting-ground all he had to do was to sit in the centre of the big canoe, and watch the ever-changing panorama of the stream. He took to sleeping in an open tent, before a big fire, as naturally as though it had been his habit throughout life. I had a little 22-calibre rifle for the benefit of the partridges; and in a week this boy, who had never before fired a gun, could shoot almost as well as I could. The only trouble was, he was not strong enough to hold a

big ten-pound 45-calibre rifle steady. He had trout and partridges whenever he wanted them to eat, and plenty of civilized food besides, for we had an excellent cook.

The second day after we got up into the



On a Raft in Louis Lake.

mountains Braithwaite and I started on a long tramp, while the boy, who was not equal to so severe a journey, remained at the camp to re-enforce the cook as home-guard. The guide and myself early in the day saw a large bunch of caribou on

the farther side of a wide valley; and after climbing around the rocks for two or three miles, to avoid their winding us, we lost sight of them entirely. Disgusted at our ill-fortune, we started back for the stream to "boil the kettle" for a midday lunch, and, on our way there, walked right in amongst the caribou, which were lying down. It was a surprise on both sides; and the caribou, of which we counted sixteen, fairly climbed over each other in their efforts to escape. After three or four wild shots I had the good luck to stop the big bull of the herd.

The next day Duncan, the cook, and Herbert, the boy, took the canoe, and went after the caribou's head and hide; and, much to our surprise, came back with two pairs of antlers instead of one.

They reported that they had seen twenty-six caribou, too far away to follow, high up on the mountain-side; but when they reached the place by the side of the stream where we told them we had left the caribou we had shot the day before, they found a lonesome bull standing within one hundred feet of his dead companion; and Herbert, who had begged the privilege of taking the big rifle along in the canoe, had shot the animal as neatly as though it



Fishing for Grouse.

had been a bull-partridge instead of a bull-caribou, though the recoil of the rifle nearly knocked the breath out of him.

The number of unmapped lakes in New Brunswick is very great. The guides are constantly discovering new ones. Many of them are mere ponds, but some of them are beautiful sheets of water two or three miles across.

These undisturbed waters are a summer paradise for the loons, whose discordant voices can be heard on any quiet day. I asked an Indian once how many lakes he

thought there were within a day's travel of the place where we were camped. His reply was: "Oh, don't know; supposem five hundred."

The guides, by the way, believe that the loon cannot be shot, except by building a fire on the shore, and shooting through the smoke, as they think the loon dives at the flash of the rifle.

One day we began wantonly firing at a loon with the 22-calibre. Every time one of us would shoot, the bird would dive, and remain down a long time. Finally we took a raft which we had made for fishing purposes, and pushed out to the centre of the little lake. By watching carefully we could shoot quickly enough to keep the loon under water, and soon it began to show signs of being short of breath. But we marvelled at the great distance that it could swim. Sometimes it would come up a hundred and fifty yards on one side of the raft, and the next time two hundred yards on the other side. Finally it came up close to the raft, and my companion killed it. As we were pushing out to pick it up, we suddenly saw another loon come up on the other side. Without knowing it, we had been keeping two loons under water, supposing all

the time there was only one. In order to make a complete job of it, we continued the same tactics as to the remaining one, and soon it too was so short of breath that it had to rise at very frequent intervals.

In two or three minutes it was a shot bird. We hung these two relentless enemies of the trout at the front of the tent; and when the men came back at night they were greatly surprised at the shattering of their traditions.

Another time we saw an old loon, with a young one sitting on her back. When we paddled toward her she dived, leaving



On the Little Southwest Miramichi River.

the fluffy little fellow on the surface. He could not go under. It was an easy thing to pick him up. After being in the canoe a minute or two, on replacing him in the water, he swam fearlessly back toward us, and we could not drive him away. The mother bird, from a safe distance, was setting up the most heart-breaking lament, so we went away and left the gosling. In a few minutes his mother found him, and expressed her joy as plainly as though she had been human.

The famous interior fishing-grounds of the United States are pretty nearly done for. In fact, nothing is so fatal to the fish as notoriety. But the resources of the remote waters of old Acadia are unimpaired. The mountain lakes contain trout in surprising numbers. The ocean-going streams of this peninsula are the finest salmon waters on the Atlantic coast. On all the accessible lower reaches of the streams, down near the coast, fishing-clubs control the privileges. But back in the distant hills, where travel is difficult, there are pools unwhipped by the angler's fly, where the summer assemblage of aristocratic fishes is a marvellous thing to see. The danger to the salmon, of course, lies in the fact that, like the wild-duck, he is

a migratory being. If he would stay up in his summer home all the year, then nothing would disturb him. But every season he must run the gantlet of the tide-water nets, of which there are a great number. The fish-laws of the Dominion allow each riparian owner on tide-water to put out a pound-net not exceeding in length one-third the width of the channel. For thirty or more miles the tide rushes up from the sea, and some of these streams are very wide as far up as tidal action extends. To the canoeist on these lower reaches it seems incredible that a single fish could escape the manifold dangers of travel through the maze of nets. But a great number do. The summer of 1895, owing to the lowness of the water, was a very bad salmon year. Yet an overland journey to the head of one of the remote tributaries of the Miramichi water system, in July, enabled us to see, in the rocky basins of the river, conventions of salmon which must have numbered thousands of individuals. Camped by the side of one of these big pools, the constant splashing made by the jumping fish was disastrous to sound sleep. The heavy, sloppy blow struck by a fifteen-pound salmon, as he tumbles back against the surface of the



Caribou lying down.

pool, after leaping three feet out, is an impressive sound. When it is repeated, on an average, once a minute all night long, it is calculated to make an angler feel that he is in the immediate presence of his friends.

One's first salmon is an event. I got mine all alone. It was on the Dungarvon, on my way into the more remote interior. In a clear pool we could see the green backs of the fish, big and little; but they were not after our flies. The others went up the stream a considerable distance, and

I remained by the pool. It needs two men to land a salmon. Presently I began idly casting, just to try my new eighteen-foot rod; and the first thing I knew a fish was hooked. He galloped around that pool, jumping out, darting back and forth, and I waded right in. After a while I got him pretty tired. I had no landing-net or gaff, but there was a smooth gravel bar forty rods below. After a while I towed the unfortunate fish down there, got him headed for shore, and ran straight back on the bar. Out he came, flopping somersaults on the gravel. The gut leader broke; but I threw myself on top of that salmon, and clasped my arms around him. He was slippery and strong, and I could not hold him. Finally I got my fingers in his gills, reached for a stone, and gave him three or four merciless whacks over the head. Then I had him. I was a sight to behold, wet and bespattered with mud and slime; but I was too proud, as well as too nearly out of breath, for words.

Most of these streams are not readily navigable for birch-bark canoes. Horses cannot be used for the transportation of camp luggage, because there is scant feed for them. The sportsman who would pen-

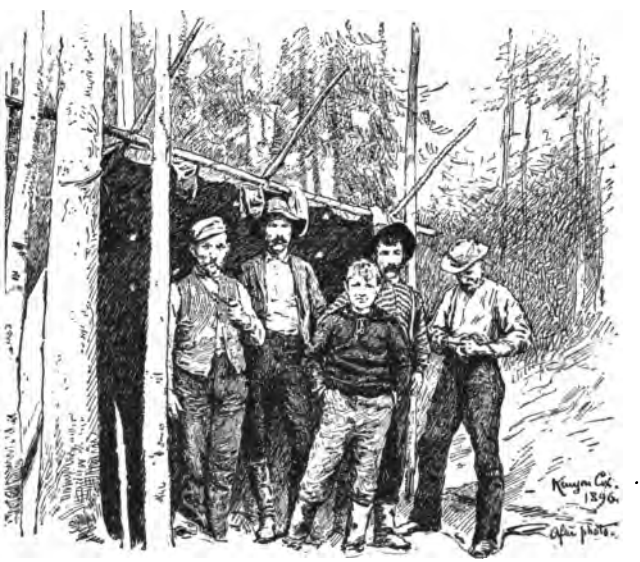
etrate to the heart of the old Acadian wilderness must nearly always do at least fifty miles of honest walking over blazed trails, through trackless swamps, across bushy mountains covered with fallen timber. He must ford unbridged streams, and his guides must carry the entire camp outfit on their backs.

There are, in the unsubdued fastnesses of the Cow Mountains and other far-away portions of New Brunswick, such dense tangles that the most determined traveller cannot possibly make more than five miles' progress in a day, over the fallen trunks, and through the thick growths. If one could travel as the bear does, on all-fours, he would do better.

Last fall, having come down an unfrequented river in a dugout constructed in the interior, Mr. Braithwaite and myself made an evening camp just at the edge of the sparse settlements which extend for some miles up the stream. The next morning a native, looking for his stray cattle, came upon us, and asked: "Didn't you come down here eight years ago?"

Mr. Braithwaite said this was the fact. The farmer then remarked: "My boy saw your canoe in the river last night, and we remembered that you came down in

one like it eight years ago." He said further, that, so far as he knew, no strange canoe had come down from the unexplored headwaters of the stream in the meantime. This incident illustrates the infrequency of travel on those boisterous mountain rivers, and is also a fine example



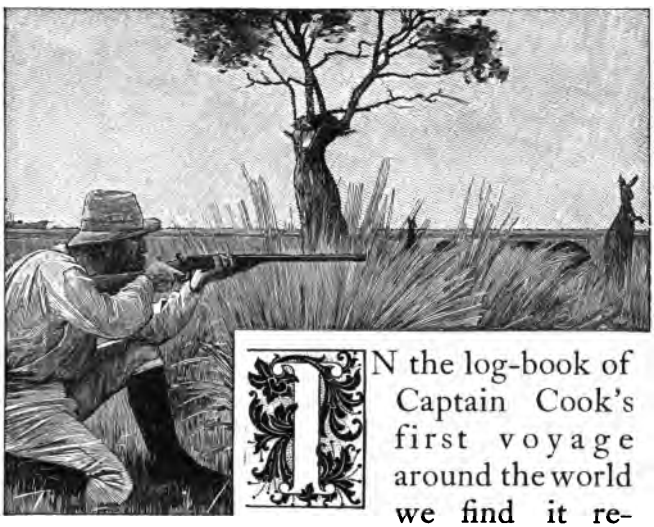
of the bushman's accuracy of observation and inference.

Undoubtedly some of this unoccupied domain, in common with other portions of the great Canadian wilderness, will some day be filled with human habitations; but

the interesting fact remains that a vast region of surpassing beauty will probably forever continue unmarred by settlement, an impregnable game preserve. Myriads of cataracts and cascades will roar unheard. Thousands of lonely lakes will smile in the summer sun, or sleep quietly under winter's covering, unvisited, except at long intervals, by man. And as the Acadian forests have survived the possession of the savage, the Gaul, and the Briton, so they will remain unharmed long after the next obvious change in the map of North America; and forest, lake, mountain, and stream will continue a perpetual joy to the hardy sportsman and the gentle lover of Nature for Nature's sake.

A KANGAROO HUNT

By Birge Harrison



Stalking a Kangaroo.

IN the log-book of Captain Cook's first voyage around the world we find it recorded, under date of July 14, 1770, that "Mr. Gore, who went out this day with his gun, had the good fortune to kill one of the animals which had been so much the subject of our speculation, . . . and which is called by the natives kanguroo." This specimen (so fortunately killed by Mr. Gore) was in all probability the first kangaroo ever brought down by the gun of the white man; but, apart from the question of its priority, the feat could scarcely have been otherwise remarkable, for at that time Australia swarmed from end to end with countless millions of these curious creatures. Not one of its desolate plains

or ghostly eucalyptus glades but was dotted more or less thickly with some of the many species of *Macropidæ;* and it is safe to say that never, in any other country in the world, has any animal been so widely disseminated or so numerous as was the kangaroo in primeval Australia.

But a hundred years of civilization have wrought a change. The great marsupial has entirely disappeared from the most settled portions of the country, and in many of the wilder parts has become as rare an apparition to-day as is the American bison upon the plains of Montana. Indeed, one humorous gentleman whom I met in Melbourne professed to regard the kangaroo as an entirely mythical animal, deserving only to be classed with the sea-serpent, the dragon, and the "bunyip" of the black fellow, whose awful voice is heard in the dead silence of the midnight forest, but whose form has never yet been seen of man. Without taking this waggish proposition too seriously, one would not go far wrong in accepting its general tenor as indicating fairly well the true state of the case; for it is quite certain that the kangaroo has so nearly disappeared from most of its old haunts as to have already taken on some of that legendary

interest which belongs to things of other days. They are still to be found in the remote parts of Gippsland, in Queensland, and notably in the unsettled portions of western Australia; but to be found at all in the year of grace 1890, they must be sought for diligently, and the sportsman who comes to Australia to-day with the expectation of finding kangaroos behind every bush, will stand a very fair chance of disappointment.

For this state of affairs the kangaroo has only to thank his own abnormal appetite. In the early days he was not only tolerated by the colonists, but was even regarded with a certain degree of favor, as a harmless creature who could be counted upon to furnish them with a never-failing supply of fresh meat; but when a little closer acquaintance discovered the fact that he was a most voracious feeder, — that one kangaroo, in fact, devoured as much grass as four or five sheep, — the squatters declared war upon the whole stupid, mild-eyed tribe, and inaugurated a system of extermination whose relentless prosecution has finally resulted in the nearly total extermi- of the species — in Victoria, at least. Regarded from the sportsman's point of view, their disappearance is certainly to be re-

gretted; for their keen scent, their fine sense of hearing, and their extreme fleetness, were all qualities which rendered them a most attractive kind of game, whether for stalking or for running with the hounds. But it must be admitted that, when viewed from the squatter's stand-point, they were little better than a noxious pest, and their extermination was a consummation much to be desired. In some parts of Victoria they formerly outnumbered the sheep as two to one; and old shepherds have told me that it was not an uncommon thing to see the sheep and the kangaroos feeding together upon the plains, as many as two or three thousand kangaroos frequently accompanying a flock of a thousand sheep. Thus it will be seen that a "station" which, in 1850, could barely graze five thousand sheep, can now be made to carry forty thousand without any danger of overstocking. Hence the very natural desire of the squatters to rid the country of so formidable a competitor.

The work of extermination was at first prosecuted by means of great stockaded kangaroo pens or yards, which were built with a wide, funnel-shaped entrance, the flanges of which extended out a mile or

two into the adjacent country. These were erected at intervals over the country, wherever the kangaroos were most numerous: and once a month, or so, all the neighboring squatters would join in a grand kangaroo "drive." Fifteen or twenty square miles of country would be surrounded, and all the animals within this radius urged gently into the wide mouth of the enclosure, and then forced into the pen at its farther extremity. From three to five thousand kangaroos were frequently secured at a single drive — not to mention the hundreds of wallaby bandicoots, native cats, and other small creatures which were inevitably caught in the general round-up. The sheep, of course, had the previous day been chased out of the region of the proposed battue.

When the animals were all within the pen the gates were closed, and the dangerous "old men" shot down with the rifle. The rest were then slaughtered with waddies and short iron bars, powder and ball being held far too precious for such work. When the kangaroos became so scarce that these drives could no longer be continued with advantage, the scattered survivors were hunted down with dogs and horses. This was a dangerous but very fascinating



An "Old Man" under a Fir-tree.

species of sport, requiring trained horses and the most expert horsemanship; for the kangaroo, when disturbed, always makes for the thickest scrub in the region, and if the rider who follows is inexpert in the ways of bush horsemanship, he stands an excellent chance of having his brains

dashed out against an overhanging limb, or his legs crushed against the trunk of a tree. Sometimes, too, the mild and gentle kangaroo himself becomes a serious source of danger; for an "old man," when winded and brought to bay, frequently proves himself a most redoubtable enemy. When thus cornered, he will generally turn fiercely upon his pursuers; and as the dogs attack him, he will lift them one by one in his arms, and disembowel them with a single downward stroke of his sharp and powerful hind hoof. When his only aggressor happens to be a man, he has been known to leap upon the horse's haunches, seize the rider about the neck from behind, and drag him from his seat; and then woe betide the unfortunate wretch, for his chances are small indeed. In certain parts of Queensland and northern Australia this wild style of kangaroo hunting is still indulged in by the rough-riders of the "back blocks;" but the day is past in Victoria when that or any other systematic method of extermination is necessary; and the day has not yet come for that leisured class of ardent sportsmen who will one day preserve the kangaroo for hunting purposes, as the deer and the wild boar are to-day preserved in the state forests of France and

Germany. In the meantime it is to be regretted that someone well acquainted with the subject has not been inspired to give us the result of his knowledge and experience; and it is with the feeling that this hiatus ought to be at least partially filled up, that I have been induced to add my own mite to the intimate history of an interesting animal which is fast disappearing, and will before long exist no more in a state of nature.

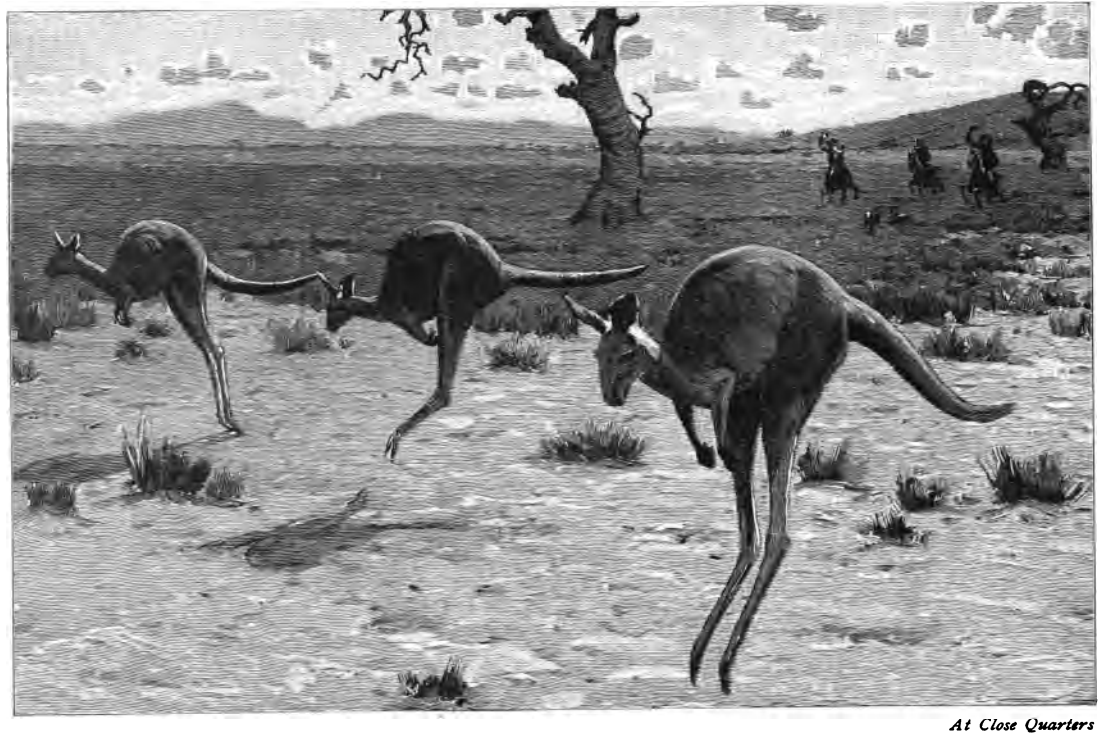
For some time after arriving in Australia, I was almost in despair of being able to gratify my ardent desires in the way of kangaroo hunting. Indeed, the difficulty and uncertainty of the quest seemed so great that I had nearly relinquished all hope of adding the great marsupial to my sportsman's tally, and had regretfully concluded to content myself with wallaby, parrots, ducks, and the ubiquitous bunny, when, by the merest chance, I stumbled upon an exciting and quite successful kangaroo hunt. Before describing this little experience, however, it will be necessary to explain briefly a few of the peculiarities of the queer quadruped in question; for the ways of the kangaroo are as the ways of no other animal upon the face of the

globe, and all systems of hunting which are employed elsewhere have had to be modified to meet some of the strange instincts and habits of this most original of beasts.

To begin with, the kangaroo is a marsupial, or pouch-bearer, the females of the species being provided with a peculiar furry sack under the belly, in which they dispose their young in case of sudden attack or need of hasty flight. But as nearly all the other native animals of Australia are also marsupial, even down to the modest little field-mouse, the naturalists have been sorely puzzled to place each specimen in its own proper niche; and it would be a brave man of science who would to-day assert positively that some specious stranger had not been allowed to slip unawares into the family group, and some true, though distant, relative had not been unduly excluded therefrom. However, the naturalists have agreed that there are about thirty distinct varieties of the kangaroo proper, ranging in size from the giant red kangaroo of Queensland, which averages eight feet in height, down to the funny little kangaroo rat of Victoria, which averages little more than eight inches. But leaving to one side the Queensland monster and

the various species of wallaby, wallaroo, etc., it may be stated in general terms that the true kangaroo, the fellow to whom the term belongs *par excellence*, is the one known to naturalists as the *Macropus giganteus*. This is a smooth-haired, mouse-colored animal, which usually stands about six feet high, and only very occasionally attains to the proportions of its Queensland cousin. The word "stand," employed in the preceding sentence, is used advisedly, and is intended to carry the fullest and most exact meaning of the term; for another singular characteristic of the kangaroo is this biped habit. Save when feeding or lying down, it always maintains an upright position, and the small fore-paws, which closely resemble a pair of diminutive hands, are never used as a means of progression. This peculiarity of the kangaroo (added to another of which I shall have to speak farther on) renders it one of the most difficult animals in the world to stalk successfully; for in every feeding herd there is sure to be at least one vigilant "old man" always standing upon guard, and his upright position, of course, enables him to survey the whole horizon round about him, and to note any unusual object long before it could approach within decent

A Kangaroo Hunt



At Close Quarters

range. When feeding quietly they sometimes drag themselves along on all fours; but their usual gait is a series of quick hops upon the two hind feet, the rest of the body remaining bunched together in a little, round, rigid ball, which never alters in shape so long as the animal is in motion. It is scarcely necessary to say that the impression produced upon an unaccustomed spectator by a fleeing kangaroo is most curious and original. To convey some idea of this comical performance, I can find no better simile than that of a rather dumpy sweet-potato which has been rounded off at the lower extremity, and is propelled by a pair of automatically moving match-sticks. Suppose another slightly curved match to be inserted for a tail, and you have a very fair presentment of the kangaroo in motion. In the illustration upon page 177, I have attempted to render something of this peculiar movement; but I am aware that I have been only partially successful, for, of course, it was impossible to portray upon a fixed surface the series of great undulating bounds which are its distinguishing characteristic. At first sight the motion appears rather slow and lazy; but this is an optical delusion, which gradually wears away as the vision

becomes accustomed to the surroundings, and is able to make comparisons. In point of fact, every one of those great hops covers twenty or thirty feet of ground; and, when the occasion demands it, a full-grown animal can speed across country at a pace which will try the mettle of the very fleetest horse. To the above particulars I have only to add that the kangaroo is entirely herbivorous in his dietetic habits, and that the home of his choice is the sparse woodland bordering upon great plains, where he is assured at once of abundant pasture and of a ready shelter from his enemies.

And now for my own little adventure. It was, after all, only a wee, small adventure, and is therefore presented with becoming diffidence; but as it was also a genuine adventure so far as it went, it is put forth with the feeling that it may perhaps have a certain historic value. I give what I have to give, wishing it were more.

It came about in this wise. I was visiting at a certain sheep-station on the Fiery Creek plains in western Victoria, when my friend R. proposed that we should take a week's holiday upon Mount Cole — partly for the sake of a change from

the routine of station life, and partly with an eye to securing a few skins of the great sulphur-crested cockatoo. These lovely birds rarely venture down upon the open plains, but are usually to be found in abundance in the sombre eucalyptus forests upon the hills. Mount Cole is one of the loftiest spurs of the great dividing range of southern Australia; and, although its highest point is only four thousand feet above the sea-level, its commanding position upon the great plains of the Wimera and Fiery Creek lends it a certain imposing grandeur. It is clothed from base to summit with a great forest of giant eucalyptus, which was, not many years since, the refuge for countless thousands of kangaroos. But it is scarcely necessary to state that these animals are very rarely seen here of late years; and it was certainly with no anticipation of kangaroo hunting that we set off from the "station" that frosty June morning. Indeed, when R. put a small rifle into the trap, just before starting, it was with a joke and a smile that showed the entirely perfunctory nature of the operation. There were a couple of good breech-loading guns, however, and a liberal supply of No. 3, No. 6, and No.

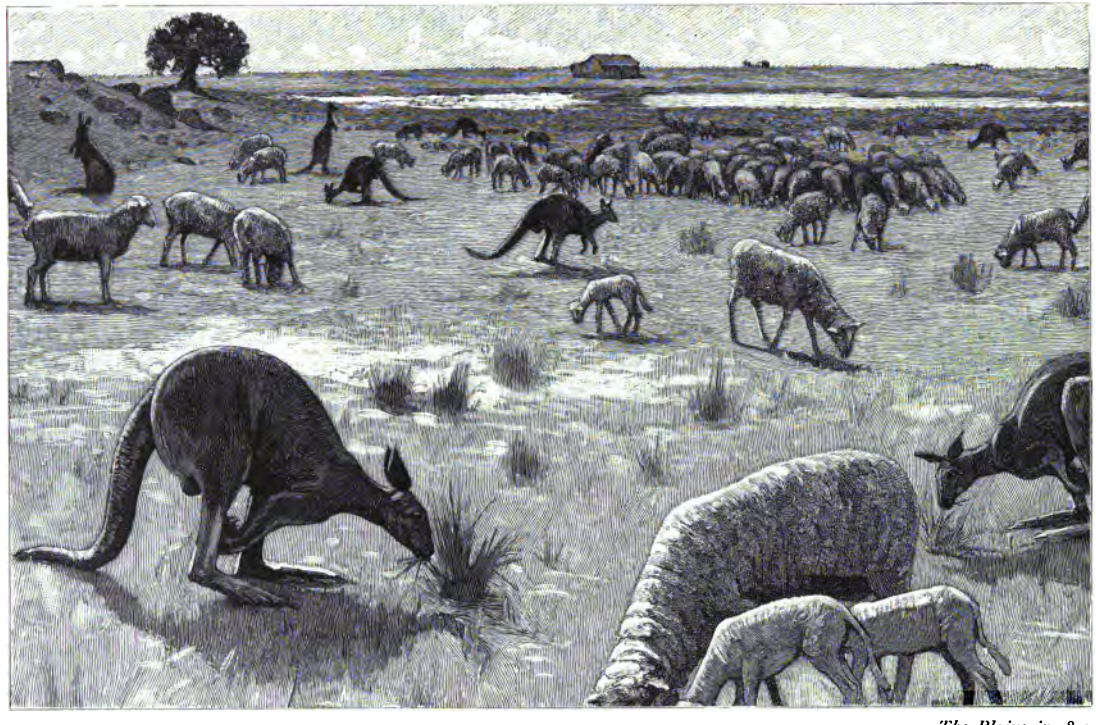
10 cartridges; and of these we expected to make good use. A pleasant drive of thirty miles over the yellow plains, dotted here and there with graceful shioke and contorted honeysuckle trees, landed us at the "selection" of one Allan Wilkinson, who was to be our host and guide. He was a long-haired, gentle-eyed native of fifty, who had been born and bred upon the mountain, and was gifted with the far sight and the slow, drawling speech of a typical Western trapper of the old days. Here we took horses and rode six miles farther into the mountains, drawing up eventually at a rough saw-mill which was owned by our gentle-mannered host. We made this our headquarters; and for several days we clambered about the hills under Wilkinson's guidance, at times losing ourselves for hours in the cloud-banks which hung perpetually about the mountain's flank, or anon attaining some lofty summit and peering through the gray vistas of eucalyptus, and out over the sunny plains to golden Ballarat or pastoral Evoca. But of game we saw none, not even the shake of a bunny's tail. The cockatoos, the wallaby, and the mountain goats seemed all to have deserted these usual feeding-grounds; and after three

days of the most energetic hunting, our bag contained only one little pair of the scarlet parrots known as lowries. At the end of that time the rain came down in torrents — came down as it knows how to do upon occasion during the Australian winter; and we were glad of the excuse to beat a retreat to Wilkinson's hospitable homestead in the foot-hills, where we found the uproar of a growing family of lusty young Victorians rather a relief after the strange and solemn stillness of the hills. But still more grateful to us was the news we received from one of the boys, to the effect that he had that afternoon seen a fine troop of kangaroos feeding quietly in a certain clearing about two miles distant from the house. His imagination had been particularly impressed by the monster proportions of a certain immense "old man" who led the herd. This incident was freely discussed over our typical Australian supper of mutton-pie and delicious tea, and R. and I resolved to have a try at the herd in question the next day. In the morning we found the storm raging as wildly as ever, and Wilkinson's kindly eyes twinkled with pleasure as he looked out upon the drenched landscape.

"My word," he exclaimed, "we *are* in luck. This is grand kangaroo weather."

The kangaroo is a late feeder, so we deferred our start until about four o'clock in the afternoon. The wind was still roaring loudly in the tall gum-trees, and the rain poured in streams down our glistening oil-skins when we set out. Thanks to the inclemency of the weather, we were not obliged to exercise any great caution in approaching the feeding-ground, and the dull light minimized the chances of our being seen. The only real danger lay in the possibility of the game getting wind of us; for no animal has a keener scent than the kangaroo, and to none is the odor of man more antipathetic. We found that the spot indicated by young Wilkinson was a "selector's" clearing in the forest, a bit of fairly level ground half a mile or so in width, which lay at the bottom of a small valley between two low spurs of the foot-hills. Covered with rich grass, and surrounded as it was on all sides by the primeval forest, it was the likeliest place in the world for kangaroo; and, as we approached, Wilkinson assured us that we could count with certainty upon their returning frequently to so favorable a feeding-ground. We were rather disappointed,

A Kangaroo Hunt



The Plains in 1840

therefore, when, upon reaching the edge of the clearing, and peering through the fringe of leaves, we could discover no living object save a few horses grazing peacefully near its centre. We were about to break cover, when my attention was attracted by a few black spots upon the farther edge of the meadow. These I pointed out to Wilkinson.

"Kangaroo, sure enough," was his whispered reply; and upon looking closely, both R. and I could see the queer, elongated objects moving about from time to time as they grazed quietly.

There were a good many of them — five — seven — nine — perhaps twelve, of sizes so varying as to suggest the idea that they must all be members of one large and growing family. Fortunately for us the wind was blowing across the clearing from north to south, while the kangaroos were grazing upon its far eastern edge, and we ourselves were placed at its extreme western extremity. We were much too far off for a safe shot, and it would be necessary, therefore, first to make a long détour through the forest so as to approach them from behind, and then to do a piece of very careful stalking; for the slope of the mountain opposite, close to which the kangaroos

were feeding, was very sparsely wooded, and any moving object upon its surface would be very likely to attract the attention of the watchful sentinel of the herd. Now, I have already observed that, under ordinary circumstances, it is nearly impossible to successfully stalk a herd of feeding kangaroos. First, of course, because of the vigilant "old man" who is always on guard; second, and more important, on account of a strange bird, called the kangaroo-warner, which is always to be found in the neighborhood of a feeding herd, ever ready to give instant warning of the approach of any suspicious-looking intruder. I was never able to obtain a satisfactory explanation of this peculiar habit of the Australian jay, — for such it is, — and the question seems to be still a moot one among Australian ornithologists; but I was informed that in former times a kangaroo-warner was never seen save in the company of its favorite marsupial. It is, of course, just possible that this belief might be traced to a certain natural desire for poetic symmetry upon the part of the native mind. If this is not the case, then one is inevitably led to the conclusion that the kangaroo-warner must be sadly in want of an occupation at the present day. In any



A Kangaroo "Dip."

case he is a queer bird; and another of his peculiarities is the fact that his spirits seem to be very much affected by a low barometrical pressure, for he is invariably silent in the rain. So in this particular we were again singularly favored by the stormy weather.

We had proceeded only a few hundred yards through the forest in making our détour, when we came upon a hard and well-beaten path with abundant kangaroo signs lying all about it. We had evi-

dently stumbled upon a track worn by the kangaroos in going to and from their feeding-ground; and as it was just as evident that when disturbed they would make off by their accustomed route, I decided to post myself here with the breech-loader and wait events, while R. went forward with the rifle, and made the attempt to stalk the herd. I should have been very pleased to have undertaken the latter part of the programme myself, as R. proposed; but while I was as anxious as any "new chum" could be to shoot a kangaroo, I was still more anxious that the kangaroo should be shot, and I was well aware that my Rocky Mountain experience of deer-stalking might fail me in a new country and against a new game, while R., who was an expert bushman, would make no mistakes. So I put a couple of fresh cartridges in my Manton and waited patiently. It was quite half an hour before Wilkinson and I saw R. again. Then he was crawling slowly down the opposite bank toward the feeding herd, taking advantage of every stump and every tussock of grass, and even wriggling along flat upon his stomach where the cover was too thin to afford protection otherwise. The kangaroos seemed to be browsing in

perfect security, perhaps lulled by the weather; and even the "old man" only raised himself occasionally to gaze about in a lazy sort of way, while he chewed his last mouthful of grass, and then lowered himself with a gentle and graceful movement, and proceeded to feed again. He was a tremendous fellow, seven or eight feet in height, as could be seen, even at this distance; and we were constrained to admit that the enthusiasm of the youthful Wilkinson had been entirely justified. After fifteen minutes of extremely careful stalking, R. succeeded in approaching within sixty yards of the herd without awakening their suspicions. Then standing up boldly, and profiting by the momentary surprise of the kangaroos, he brought the "old man" down with a well-aimed shot below and behind the shoulder. As had been foreseen, the rest of the herd immediately made off in our direction; but instead of scattering pell-mell as other wild animals would have done under like circumstances, these queer denizens of a queer country fell into line, and departed in regular Indian file, the big old doe leading the way, and the smallest diminutive pickaninnies bringing up the rear. The doe covered the ground with

tremendous leisurely hops, holding her fore-paws before her in a mincing way that was very comical. The smaller animals — each an exact, though diminutive, counterpart of the leader — followed in gradually diminishing perspective, every little beggar hopping just a little more rapidly than the one before him, until the fast-flying legs of the last puny fellow at the end of the line were blurred like the spokes of a wheel in rapid motion. The effect of this extraordinary procession was, to my unaccustomed eyes, so altogether ludicrous and absurd, that I nearly lost my shot in an uncontrollable burst of laughter. As it was, I might just as well have had my laugh out to the end; for although I let the old doe have both barrels full in the flank as she passed me at twenty yards' distance, she never even faltered in her course, and had quite disappeared in the scrub, with all her numerous progeny at her heels, before I had time to replace the empty cartridges. The No. 3 shot, in all probability, had little more effect upon her tough hide than so many grains of sand. Nevertheless, it might perhaps have brought her down if I had aimed at the head, for one pellet penetrating the brain through the eye would have been suffi-



Skinning.

cient. But the motion was so eccentric and perplexing that this would have been a very risky shot; and I preferred the chance of stunning her by a direct double charge full in the body, to the almost absolute certainty of missing her altogether by attempting the more difficult shot.

While this curious procession was defiling before me, I took occasion to observe carefully the peculiarities of their gait, and especially to note the use they made of their extremely powerful tail when in rapid flight; for I had heard more than one

opinion upon the subject, and some Australians seem to believe that the kangaroo mainly owes its extreme fleetness to the aid it receives from its muscular caudal appendage. But upon this occasion, at least, I am able to own that every animal held its tail straight out behind it; and if there had remained any doubt upon the subject the impressions left in the muddy soil would have settled the question beyond cavil, for the only imprints were those of the sharp-pointed hoofs of the hind feet.

R's "old man" proved to be a magnificent specimen, measuring seven feet six inches from hoof to snout. It was fortunate that he had been killed outright at the first shot, for he would assuredly have proved himself a very ugly customer if only wounded and partially disabled. Wilkinson assured us that the pelt of this fine fellow would be worth more than a pound sterling in the Melbourne market, for kangaroo leather has lately come into great demand for the higher grades of bookbinding and other work of that kind. Such is the irony of fate; the much-hated pest of forty years ago has become the much-prized rarity of to-day, and the hide alone of one kangaroo is worth the price of four fine sheep.

We skinned him hastily, — for the light was failing by this time, — and slung the great tail and the hind quarters over a pole of tough black wattle which Wilkinson cut out of the neighboring scrub, leaving the remainder of the carcass to feed the foxes, the native cats, and the bandicoots. It was all we could do to struggle home under the weight of this small half of our booty; but by relieving one another occasionally we succeeded at length in reaching the mountain homestead, a triumphant, though wet and dilapidated, procession.

The older generation of Australians have the strongest objection to consuming the flesh of the kangaroo, in any shape or form, a prejudice for which I could only account by supposing that they must have suffered from a surfeit of this form of diet in their youth; for the younger generation are rather partial to kangaroo flesh than otherwise, and I found it excellent myself in every way. It has a delicate, gamey flavor, something between that of vension and grouse; and, like vension, it is the better for a week's hanging before going to the spit. The best part of the animal — the especial delicacy — is the great fleshy tail. This is delicious prepared in any one of the various styles that are known to the

art of cookery, either roast, or boiled, or braised, or potted, or stewed; but it is more especially to be recommended in the form of soup. Kangaroo-tail soup is a sort of glorified ox-tail that would tickle the jaded palate of the veriest old epicure.

Kangaroos make delightful pets. They are very easily domesticated, and when tamed are full of pretty, affectionate ways. I knew of one, belonging to some Australian ladies, which came regularly into the drawing-room every afternoon to partake daintily of five-o'clock tea; and of another which got into the habit of accompanying its master in all his shooting expeditions, often covering twenty-five or thirty miles of country in the course of a day's sport. Although not especially clever in the way of tricks, they are possessed of retentive memories, and are very quick to recognize a friend or to resent an injury. While preparing the illustrations which accompany this article, I went frequently to the Melbourne Royal Park, where the magnificent collection of *Macropidæ* afforded me peculiar facilities for observing and sketching.

In one of the paddocks there was a splendid "old man," who seemed to me to epitomize all the strange peculiarities

of his kind; and I chose him as my especial model. In order to study exhaustively all their eccentricities of motion, I got into the habit of stirring this old fellow up with pebbles, small clods of earth, or anything else which came to my hand. He soon began to resent this treatment; and finally, the moment I appeared upon the grounds, he would rush up to the barrier and stand at bay, spitting at me savagely, and exhibiting every sign of the most furious rage. In another paddock were some very pretty does, with great, soft, liquid eyes like those of an antelope. These I tried to make friends with, feeding them regularly with buns and sweets, of which they are very fond. The result was that one of them soon came to know me well, and always came up to be stroked and petted.

If the colonization of Australia continues at the same rapid pace at which it is now proceeding, it is hardly too much to say that, fifty years from date, the kangaroo will only be known as a domestic pet, or preserved perhaps upon some gentleman's private estate, like the deer in the royal park at Windsor. Their places will then be taken by the deer and the foxes, which have, during the past few

years, increased so enormously as to indicate that transportation to the southern hemisphere has augmented their vitality and increased their procreative energy.

THE LAST OF THE BUFFALO

By George Bird Grinnell



Buffalo's Head.

ON the floor, on either side of my fireplace, lie two buffalo skulls. They are white and weathered, the horns cracked and bleached by the snows and frosts and the rains and heats of many winters and summers. Often, late at night, when the house is quiet, I sit

before the fire, and muse and dream of the old days; and as I gaze at these relics of the past, they take life before my eyes. The matted brown hair again clothes the dry bone, and in the empty orbits the wild eyes gleam. Above me curves the blue arch; away on every hand stretches the yellow prairie, and scattered near and far are the dark forms of buffalo. They dot the rolling hills, quietly feeding like tame cattle, or lie at ease on the slopes, chewing the cud and half asleep. The yellow calves are close by their mothers; on little eminences the great bulls paw the dust, and mutter and moan, while those whose horns have grown one, two, and three winters are mingled with their elders.

Not less peaceful is the scene near some river-bank, when the herds come down to water. From the high prairie on every side they stream into the valley, stringing along in single file, each band following the deep trail worn in the parched soil by the tireless feet of generations of their kind. At a quick walk they swing along, their heads held low; the long beards of the bulls sweep the ground; the shuffling tread of many hoofs marks their passing, and above each long line rises a cloud of

dust that sometimes obscures the westering sun.

Life, activity, excitement, mark another memory as vivid as these. From behind a near hill, mounted men ride out, and charge down toward the herd. For an instant the buffalo pause to stare, and then crowd together in a close throng, jostling and pushing each other, a confused mass of horns, hair, and hoofs. Heads down and tails in air, they rush away from their pursuers; and as they race along herd joins herd, till the black mass sweeping over the prairie numbers thousands. On its skirts hover the active, nimble horsemen, with twanging bowstrings and sharp arrows piercing many fat cows. The naked Indians cling to their naked horses as if the two were parts of one incomparable animal, and swing and yield to every motion of their steeds with the grace of perfect horsemanship. The ponies, as quick and skilful as the men, race up beside the fattest of the herd, swing off to avoid the charge of a maddened cow, and returning, dart close to the victim, whirling hither and yon, like swallows on the wing. And their riders, with the unconscious skill, grace, and power of matchless archery, are drawing their bows to the arrow's head,

and driving the feathered shaft deep through the bodies of the buffalo. Returning on their tracks, they skin the dead, then load meat and robes on their horses, and with laughter and jest ride away.

After them, on the deserted prairie, come the wolves to tear at the carcasses. The rain and the snow wash the blood from the bones, and fade and bleach the hair. For a few months the skeleton holds together; then it falls down, and the fox and the badger pull about the whitening bones, and scatter them over the plain. In some such way came the bones of this cow and this bull of mine on the prairie where I found them, and picked them up to keep as mementoes of the past, to dream over, and in such revery to see again the swelling hosts which yesterday covered the plains, and to-day are but a dream.

So the buffalo passed into history. Once an inhabitant of this continent from the Arctic slope to Mexico and from Virginia to Oregon, and within the memory of men yet young roaming the plains in such numbers that it seemed that it could never be exterminated, it has now disappeared as utterly as has the bison from Europe. For it is probable that the existing herds of that practically extinct spe-

cies, now carefully guarded in the forests of Grodno, even exceed in numbers the buffalo in the Yellowstone Park; while the wild bison in the Caucasus may be compared with the "wood" buffalo which survive in the Peace River district. In view of the former abundance of our buffalo, this parallel is curious and interesting.

The early explorers were constantly astonished by the multitudinous herds which they met with, the regularity of their movements, and the deep roads which they made in travelling from place to place. Many of the earlier references are to territory east of the Mississippi, but even within the last fifteen years buffalo were to be seen on the Western plains in numbers so great that an entirely sober and truthful account seems like fable. Describing the abundance of buffalo in a certain region, an Indian once said to me, in the expressive sign language of which all old frontiersmen have some knowledge, "The country was one robe."

Much has been written about their enormous abundance in the old days, but I have never read anything that I thought an exaggeration of their numbers as I have seen them. Only one who has actually spent months in travelling among them in

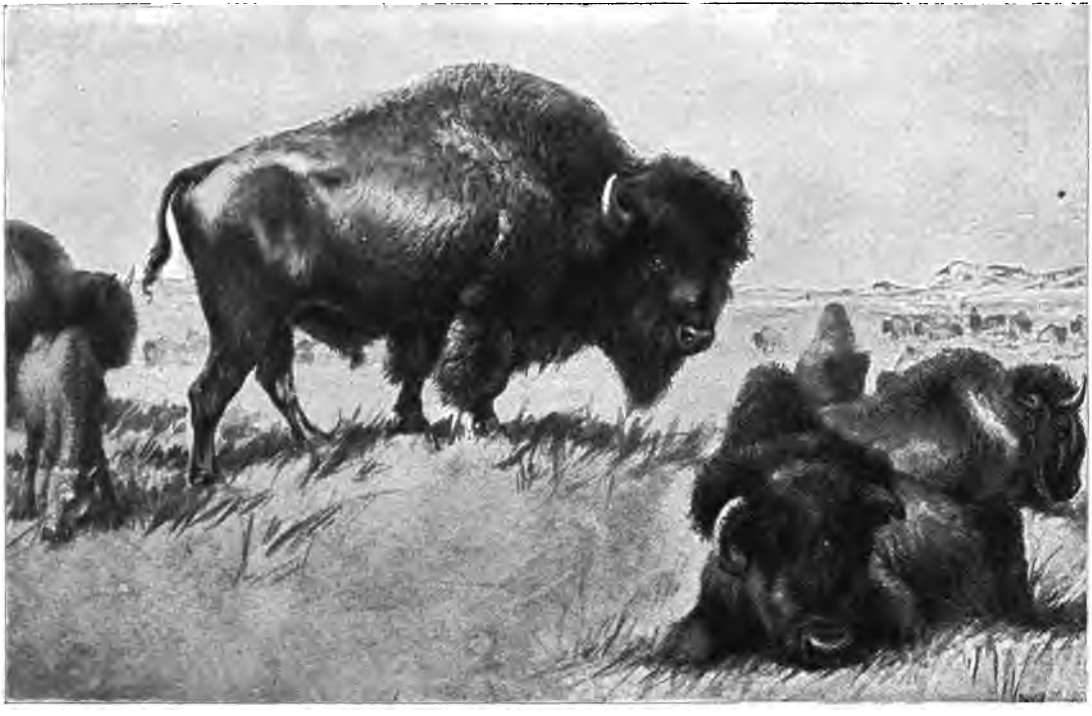
those old days can credit the stories told about them. The trains of the Kansas Pacific Railroad used frequently to be detained by herds which were crossing the tracks in front of the engines; and in 1870, trains on which I was travelling were twice so held, in one case for three hours. When railroad travel first began on this road, the engineers tried the experiment of running through these passing herds; but after their engines had been thrown from the tracks they learned wisdom, and gave the buffalo the right of way. Two or three years later, in the country between the Platte and Republican Rivers, I saw a closely massed herd of buffalo so vast that I dare not hazard a guess as to its numbers; and in later years I travelled for weeks at a time, in northern Montana, without ever being out of sight of buffalo. These were not in close herds, except now and then when alarmed and running, but were usually scattered about, feeding, or lying down on the prairie at a little distance from one another, much as domestic cattle distribute themselves in a pasture or on the range. As far as we could see on every side of the line of march, and ahead, the hillsides were dotted with dark forms; and the field-glass revealed yet others on

every side, stretched out in one continuous host to the most distant hills. Thus was gained a more just notion of their numbers than could be had in any other way; for the sight of this limitless territory occupied by these continuous herds was more impressive than the spectacle of a surging, terrified mass of fleeing buffalo, even though the numbers which passed rapidly before one's gaze in a short time were very great.

The former range of the buffalo has been worked out with painstaking care by Dr. J. A. Allen, to whom we owe an admirable monograph on this species. He concludes that the northern limit of this range was north of the Great Slave Lake, in latitude about 63° N.; while to the south it extended into Mexico as far as latitude 25° N. To the west it ranged at least as far as the Blue Mountains of Oregon; while on the east it was abundant in the western portions of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. In the interior the buffalo were very abundant, and occupied Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee, western Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa, parts of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, the whole of the great plains,

from southern Texas north to their northern limit, and much of the Rocky Mountains. In Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and most of New Mexico they were abundant, and probably common over a large part of Utah, and perhaps in northern Nevada. So far as now known, their western limit was the Blue Mountains of Oregon and the eastern foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

Thus it will be seen that the buffalo once ranged over a large part of the American Continent, — Dr. Allen says one-third of it; but it must not be imagined that they were always present at the same time in every part of their range. They were a wandering race, sometimes leaving a district and being long absent, and again returning and occupying it for a considerable period. What laws or what impulses governed these movements we cannot know. Their wandering habits were well understood by the Indians of the Western plains, who depended upon the buffalo for food. It was their custom to follow the herds about; and when, as sometimes occurred, these moved away and could not be found, the Indians were reduced to great straits for food, and sometimes even starved to death.



At Midday

Under natural conditions the buffalo was an animal of rather sluggish habits, mild, inoffensive, and dull. In its ways of life and intelligence it closely resembled our domestic cattle. It was slow to learn by experience, and this lack of intelligence greatly hastened the destruction of the race. Until the very last years of its existence as a species, it did not appear to connect the report of fire-arms with any idea of danger to itself, and, though constantly pursued, did not become wild. If he used skill and judgment in shooting, a hunter who had "got a stand" on a small bunch could kill them all before they had moved out of rifle-shot. It was my fortune, one summer, to hunt for a camp of soldiers; and more than once I have lain on a hill above a little herd of buffalo, shot down what young bulls I needed to supply the camp, and then walked down to the bunch, and, by waving my hat and shouting, driven off the survivors, so that I could prepare the meat for transportation to camp. This slowness to take the alarm, or indeed to realize the presence of danger, was characteristic of the buffalo almost up to the very last. A time did come when they were alarmed readily enough; but this was not until all the large herds

had been broken up and scattered, and the miserable survivors had been so chased and harried that at last they learned to start and run even at their own shadows.

Another peculiarity of the buffalo was its habit, when stampeded, of dashing blindly forward against, over, or through anything that might be in the way. When running, a herd of buffalo followed its leaders; and yet these leaders lost the power of stopping, or even of turning aside, because they were constantly crowded upon and pushed forward by those behind. This explains why herds would dash into mire or quicksands, as they often did, and thus perish by the thousands. Those in front could not stop, while those behind could not see the danger toward which they were rushing. So, too, they ran into rivers, or into traps made for them by the Indians, or against railroad cars, or even dashed into the rivers, and swam blindly against the sides of steamboats. If an obstacle lay squarely across their path, they tried to go through it; but if it lay at an angle to their course they would turn a little to avoid it.

The buffalo calf is born from April to June, and at first is an awkward little creature, looking much like a domestic

calf, but with a shorter neck. The hump at first is scarcely noticeable, but develops rapidly. They are odd-looking and very playful little animals. They are easily caught and tamed, when quite young; but when a few months old they become as shy as the old buffalo, and are much more swift of foot.

Although apparently very sluggish, buffalo are really extremely active, and are able to go at headlong speed over a country where no man would dare to ride a horse. When alarmed, they will throw themselves down the almost vertical side of a cañon, and climb the opposite wall with catlike agility; and sometimes they will descend cut banks by jumping from shelf to shelf of rock like the mountain sheep. To get at water when thirsty, they will climb down bluffs that seem altogether impracticable for such great animals. Many years ago, while descending the Missouri River in a flatboat with two companions, I landed in a wide bottom to kill a mountain sheep. As we were bringing the meat to the boat, we saw on the opposite side of the river, about half-way down the bluffs, which were here about fifteen hundred feet high, a large buffalo bull. The bluffs were al-

most vertical, and this old fellow was having some difficulty in making his way down to the water. He went slowly and carefully, at times having pretty good going, and at others slipping and sliding for thirty or forty feet, sending the clay and stones rolling ahead of him in great quantities. We watched him for a little while, and then it occurred to some malicious spirit among us that it would be fun to see whether the bull could go up where he had come down. A shot was fired so as to strike near him, for no one wanted to hurt the old fellow; and as soon as the report reached his ears, he turned about, and began to scramble up the bluffs. His first rush carried him perhaps a hundred feet vertically, and then he stopped and looked around. He seemed not to have the slightest difficulty in climbing up, nor did he use any caution, or appear to pick his way at all. A second shot caused another rush up the steep ascent; but this time he went only half as far as before, and again stopped. Three or four other shots drove him by shorter and shorter rushes up the bluffs, until at length he would go no farther, and subsequent shots only caused him to shake his head angrily. Plainly he had

climbed until his wind had given out, and now he would stand and fight. Our fun was over; and looking back as we floated down the river, our last glimpse was of the old bull, still standing on his shelf, waiting with lowered head for the unknown enemy that he supposed was about to attack him.

It is not only under stress of circumstances that the bison climbs. The mountain buffalo is almost as active as the mountain sheep, and was often found in places that tested the nerve and activity of a man to reach; and even the buffalo of the plains had a fondness for high places, and used to climb up on to broken buttes or high rocky points in the foothills. I have often noticed the same habit among range cattle and horses.

The buffalo were fond of rolling in the dirt; and to this habit, practised when the ground was wet, are due the buffalo wallows which so frequently occur in the old ranges, and which often contain water after all other moisture, except that of the streams, is dried up. These wallows were formed by the rolling of a succession of buffalo in the same moist place, and were often quite deep. They have frequently been described. Less well known

was the habit of scratching against trees and rocks. Sometimes a solitary erratic bowlder, five or six feet high, may be seen on the bare prairie, with the ground immediately around it worn down two or three feet below the level of the surrounding earth. This is where the buffalo walked about the stone, rubbing against it, and where they trod loosening the soil, which has been blown away by the wind, so that in course of time a deep trench was worn about the rock. Often single trees along streams were worn quite smooth by the shoulders and sides of the buffalo.

When the first telegraph line was built across the continent, the poles used were light and small; for transportation over the plains was slow and expensive, and it was not thought necessary to raise the wires high above the ground. These poles were much resorted to by the buffalo to scratch against, and before long a great many of them were pushed over. A story, now of considerable antiquity, is told of an ingenious employee of the telegraph company, who devised a plan for preventing the buffalo from disturbing the poles. This he expected to accomplish by driving into them spikes which should prick the animals when they rubbed

against them. The result somewhat astonished the inventor; for it was discovered that, where formerly one buffalo rubbed against the smooth telegraph poles, ten now struggled and fought for the chance to scratch themselves against the spiked poles, the iron furnishing just the irritation which their tough hides needed.

It was in spring, when his coat was being shed, that the buffalo, odd-looking enough at any time, presented his most grotesque appearance. The matted hair and wool of the shoulders and sides began to peel off in great sheets; and these sheets, clinging to the skin and flapping in the wind, gave the animal the appearance of being clad in rags.

The buffalo was a timid creature, but brought to bay would fight with ferocity. There were few sights more terrifying to the novice than the spectacle of an old bull at bay. His mighty bulk a quivering mass of active, enraged muscle, the shining horns, the little, spiky tail, and the eyes half hidden beneath the shaggy frontlet, yet gleaming with rage, combined to render him an awe-inspiring object. Nevertheless, owing to their greater speed and activity, the cows were much more to be feared than the bulls.

It was once thought that the buffalo performed annually extensive migrations, and it was even said that those which spent the summer on the banks of the Saskatchewan wintered in Texas. There is no reason for believing this to have been true. Undoubtedly there were slight general movements north and south, and east and west, at certain seasons of the year; but many of the accounts of these movements are entirely misleading, because greatly exaggerated. In one portion of the northern country I know that there was a decided east and west seasonal migration; the herds tending in spring away from the mountains, while in the autumn they worked back again, no doubt seeking shelter in the rough, broken country of the foothills from the cold west winds of the winter.

The buffalo is easily tamed when caught as a calf, and in all its ways of life resembles the domestic cattle. It at once learns to respect a fence, and manifests no disposition to wander.

Three years ago there were in this country about two hundred and fifty domesticated buffalo, in the possession of about a dozen individuals. Of these the most important herd was that of Hon.



Indian Maul.

C. J. Jones, of Garden City, Kan., which included about fifty animals, captured and reared by himself, and the Bedson herd of over eighty, purchased in Manitoba. The Jones herd at one time consisted of about one hundred and fifty head. Next came that of Charles Allard and Michel Pablo, of the Flat Head Agency in Montana, which in 1888 numbered thirty-five, and has now increased to about ninety. Mr. Jones's herd has been broken up; and he now retains only about forty-five head, of which fifteen are breeding cows. He tells me that within the past year or two he has sold over sixty pure buffalo, and that nearly as many more have died through injuries received in transporting them by rail. Mr. Jones is the only individual who

of recent years has made any systematic effort to cross the buffalo with our own domestic cattle. As far back as the beginning of the present century, this was successfully done in the West and Northwest, and in Audubon and Bachman's *Quadrupeds of America* may be found an extremely interesting account, written by Robert Wickliffe, of Lexington, Ky., giving the results of a series of careful and successful experiments which he carried on for more than thirty years. These experiments showed that the cross for certain purposes was a very valuable one, but no systematic efforts to establish and perpetuate a breed of buffalo cattle were afterwards made until within the past ten years. Mr. Jones has bred buffalo bulls to Galloway, Polled Angus, and ordinary range cows, and has succeeded in obtaining calves from all. Such half-breeds are of very large size, extremely hardy, and, as a farmer would say, "easy keepers." They are fertile among themselves or with either parent. A half-breed cow of Mr. Jones's that I examined was fully as large as an ordinary work-ox, and in spring, while nursing a calf, was fat on grass. She lacked the buffalo hump, but her hide would have made a good robe. The

great size and tremendous frame of these cross-bred cattle should make them very valuable for beef; while their hardiness would exempt them from the dangers from winter, — so often fatal to domestic range cattle, — and they produce a robe which is quite as valuable as that of the buffalo, and more beautiful because more even all over. If continued, these attempts at cross-breeding may do much to improve our Western range cattle.

Mr. Jones has sold a number of buffalo to persons in Europe, where there is considerable demand for them. It is to be hoped that no more of these domesticated buffalo will be allowed to leave the country where they were born. Indeed, it would seem quite within the lines of the work now being carried on by the Agricultural Department for the Government to purchase all the domesticated American buffalo that can be had, and to start, in some one of the Western States, an experimental farm for buffalo breeding and buffalo crossing. With a herd of fifty pure bred buffalo cows and a sufficient number of bulls, a series of experiments could be carried on which might be of great value to the cattle growers of our Western country. The stock of pure buffalo could be

kept up and increased; surplus bulls, pure and half bred, could be sold to farmers; and, in time, the new race of buffalo cattle might become so firmly established that it would endure.

To undertake this with any prospect of success, such a farm would have to be managed by a man of intelligence and of wide experience in this particular field; otherwise all the money invested would be wasted. Mr. Jones is perhaps the only man living who knows enough of this subject to carry on such an experimental farm with success.

Although only one species of buffalo is known to science, old mountaineers and Indians tell of four kinds. These are, besides the ordinary animal of the plains, the "mountain buffalo," sometimes called "bison," which is found in the timbered Rocky Mountains; the "wood buffalo" of the Northwest, which inhabits the timbered country to the west and north of Athabaska Lake; and the "beaver buffalo." The last named has been vaguely described to me by northern Indians as small and having a very curly coat. I know of only one printed account of it; and this says that it had "short, sharp horns, which were small at the root and

curiously turned up and bent backward, not unlike a ram's, but quite unlike the bend of the horn in the common buffalo." It is possible that this description may refer to the musk ox and not to a buffalo. The "mountain" and "wood" buffalo seem to be very much alike in habit and appearance. They are larger, darker, and heavier than the animal of the plains; but there is no reason for thinking them specifically distinct from it. Such differences as existed were due to the conditions of their environments.

The color of the buffalo in its new coat is a dark liver-brown. This soon changes, however, and the robes, which are at their best in November and in early December, begin to grow paler toward the spring; and when the coat is shed, the hair and wool from the young animals are almost a dark smoky-gray. The calf when first born is of a bright yellow color, almost a pale red on the line of the back. As it grows older it becomes darker, and by late autumn is almost as dark as the adults. Variations from the normal color are very rare; but pied, spotted, and roan animals were sometimes killed. Blue or mouse-colored buffalo were occasionally seen; and a bull of this color was observed in the

National Park in January, 1892. White buffalo — though often referred to as mythical — sometimes occurred. These varied from gray to cream-white. The rare and valuable "silk" or "beaver" robe owes its name to its dark color and its peculiar sheen or gloss. White or spotted robes were highly valued by the Indians. Among the Blackfeet they were presented to the Sun as votive offerings. Other tribes kept them in their sacred bundles.

Apart from man, the buffalo had but few natural enemies. Of these the most destructive were the wolves, which killed a great many of them, chiefly however, old, straggling bulls; for the calves were protected by their mothers, and the females and young stock were so vigorous and so gregarious that they had but little to fear from this danger. It is probable that, notwithstanding the destruction which they wrought, the wolves performed an important service for the buffalo race, keeping it vigorous and healthy by killing weak, disabled, and superannuated animals, which could no longer serve any useful purpose in the herd, and yet consumed the grass which would support healthy breeding animals. It is certainly true that sick

buffalo, or those out of condition, were rarely seen.

The grizzly bear fed to some extent on the carcasses of buffalo drowned in the rivers or caught in the quicksands, and occasionally caught living buffalo and killed them. A Blackfoot Indian told me of an attempt of this kind which he witnessed. He was lying hidden by a buffalo trail in the Bad Lands, near a little creek, waiting for a small bunch to come down to water, so that he might kill one. The buffalo came on in single file as usual, the leading animal being a young heifer. When they had nearly reached the water, and were passing under a vertical clay wall, a grizzly bear, lying hid on a shelf of this wall, reached down, and with both paws caught the heifer about the neck and threw himself upon her. The others at once ran off; and a short struggle ensued, the bear trying to kill the heifer, and she to escape. Almost at once, however, the Indian saw a splendid young bull come rushing down the trail toward the scene of conflict, and charge the bear, knocking him down. A fierce combat ensued. The bull would charge the bear, and when he struck him fairly would knock him off his feet, often inflicting severe wounds with his sharp

horns. The bear struck at the bull, and tried to catch him by the head or shoulders, and to hold him; but this he could not do. After fifteen or twenty minutes of fierce and active fighting the bear had received all the punishment he cared for, and tried to escape; but the bull would not let him go, and kept up the attack until he had killed his adversary. Even after the bear was dead the bull would gore the carcass, and sometimes lift it clear of the ground on his horns. He seemed insane with rage, and, notwithstanding the fact that most of the skin was torn from his head and shoulders, appeared to be looking about for something else to fight. The Indian was very much afraid lest the bull should discover and kill him, and was greatly relieved when he finally left the bear and went off to join his band. This Blackfoot had never heard of Uncle Remus's tales; but he imitated Brer Rabbit — lay low and said nothing.

To the Indians the buffalo was the staff of life. It was their food, clothing, dwellings, tools. The needs of a savage people are not many, perhaps; but whatever the Indians of the plains had, that the buffalo gave them. It is not strange, then, that this animal was reverenced by most plains

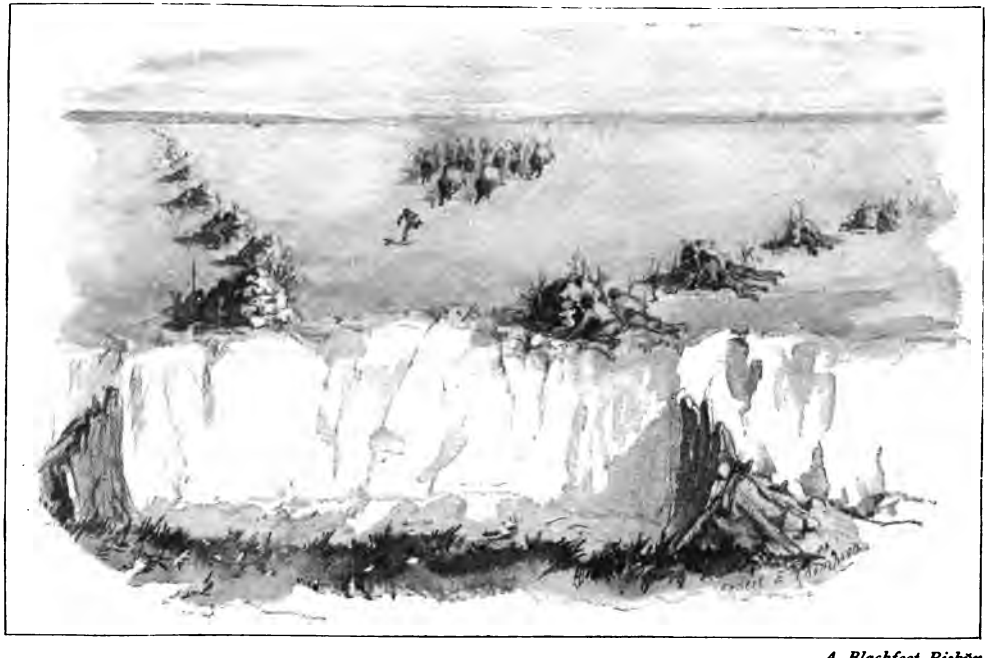
tribes, nor that it entered largely into their sacred ceremonies, and was in a sense worshipped by them. "Through the corn and the buffalo we worship the Father," say the Pawnees. "What one of all the animals is most sacred?" ask the Blackfeet; and the reply given is, "The buffalo."

The robe was the Indian's winter covering and his bed; while the skin, freed from the hair and dressed, constituted his summer sheet or blanket. Dressed hides were used for moccasins, leggings, shirts, and women's dresses. Dressed cow-skins formed their lodges, the warmest and most comfortable portable shelters ever devised. Braided strands of raw hide furnished them with ropes and lines, and these were made also from the twisted hair. The green hide was sometimes used as a kettle, in which to boil meat, or, stretched over a frame of boughs, gave them coracles, or boats, for crossing rivers. The tough, thick hide of the bull's neck, allowed to shrink smooth, made a shield which would turn a lance-thrust, an arrow, or even the ball from an old-fashioned smooth-bore gun. From the raw hide, the hair having been shaved off, were made parfleches, — envelope-like

cases which served for trunks or boxes, useful to contain small articles. The cannon-bones and ribs were used to make implements for dressing hides, the shoulder-blades lashed to sticks made hoes and axes, and the ribs runners for small sledges drawn by dogs. The hoofs were boiled to make a glue for fastening the feathers and heads on their arrows; the hair used to stuff cushions, and later saddles; strands of the long black beard to ornament articles of wearing-apparel and implements of war, such as shields and quivers. The sinews lying along the back gave them thread and bow-strings, and backed their bows. The horns furnished spoons and ladles, and ornamented their war bonnets. Water buckets were made from the lining of the paunch. The skin of the hind leg cut off above the pastern, and again a short distance above the hock, was once used for a moccasin or boot. Fly-brushes were made from the skin of the tail dried on sticks. Knife-sheaths, quivers, bow-cases, gun-covers, saddle-cloths, and a hundred other useful and necessary articles, all were furnished by the buffalo.

The Indians killed some smaller game, as elk, deer, and antelope; but for food their dependence was on the buffalo. But

The Last of the Buffalo



A Blackfoot Piskän

before the coming of the whites their knives and arrow-heads were merely sharpened stones, weapons which would be inefficient against such great, thick-skinned beasts. Even under the most favorable circumstances, with these primitive implements, they could not kill food in quantities sufficient to supply their needs. They must have some means of taking the buffalo in considerable numbers. Such wholesale capture was accomplished by traps or surrounds, which all depended for success on one characteristic of the animal, its curiosity.

The Blackfeet, Plains Crees, Gros Ventres of the Prairie, Sarcees, some bands of the Dakotas, Snakes, Crows, and some others, drove the herds of buffalo into pens from above, or over high cliffs, where the fall killed or crippled a large majority of the herd. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes drove them into pens on level ground; the Blackfeet, Aricaras, Mandans, Gros Ventres of the Village, Pawnees, Omahas, Otoes, and others, surrounded the herds in great circles on the prairie, and then frightening them so that they started running, kept them from breaking through the line of men, and made them race round and round in a circle, until

they were so exhausted that they could not run away, and were easily killed.

These primitive modes of slaughter have been described by earlier writers, and frequently quoted in recent years; yet in all that has been written I fail to find a single account which gives at all a true notion of the methods employed, or the means by which the buffalo were brought into the enclosures. Eye-witnesses have been careless observers, and have taken many things for granted. My understanding of this matter is derived from men who from childhood have been familiar with these things; and from them, during years of close association, I have again and again heard the story of these old hunting methods.

The trap of the Backfeet was called the *pískŭn.* It was an enclosure, one side of which was formed by the vertical wall of a cut bank, the others being built of rocks, logs, poles, and brush six or eight feet high. It was not necessary that these walls should be very strong; but they had to be tight, so that the buffalo could not see through them. From a point on the cut bank above this enclosure, in two diverging lines stretching far out into the prairie, piles of rock were heaped up at

short intervals, or bushes were stuck in the ground, forming the wings of a V-shaped chute, which would guide any animals running down the chute to its angle above the *pískŭn*. When a herd of buffalo were feeding near at hand, the people prepared for the hunt, in which almost the whole camp took part. It is commonly stated that the buffalo were driven into the *pískŭn* by mounted men, but this is not the case. They were not driven, but led; and they were led by an appeal to their curiosity. The man who brought them was usually the possessor of a "buffalo rock," a talisman which was believed to give him greater power to call the buffalo than was had by others. The previous night was spent by this man in praying for success in the enterprise of the morrow. The help of the Sun, *Nápi*, and all Above People was asked for, and sweet grass was burned to them. Early in the morning, without eating or drinking, the man started away from the camp, and went up on the prairie. Before he left the lodge he told his wives that they must not go out, or even look out, of the lodge during his absence. They should stay there, and pray to the Sun for his success, and burn sweet grass until he

returned. When he left the camp, and went out on the prairie toward the buffalo, all the people followed him, and distributed themselves along the wings of the chute, hiding behind the piles of rocks or brush. The caller sometimes wore a robe and a bull's-head bonnet, or at times was naked. When he had approached close to the buffalo, he endeavored to attract their attention by moving about, wheeling round and round, and alternately appearing and disappearing. The feeding buffalo soon began to raise their heads and stare at him; and presently the nearest ones would walk toward him to discover what this strange creature might be, and the others would follow. As they began to approach, the man withdrew toward the entrance of the chute. If the buffalo began to trot, he increased his speed; and before very long he had the herd well within the wings. As soon as they had passed the first piles of rock, behind which some of the people were concealed, the Indians sprang into view, and by yelling and waving robes frightened the hindmost of the buffalo, which then began to run down the chute. As they passed along, more and more people showed themselves and added to their terror; and

in a very short time the herd was in a headlong stampede, guided toward the angle above the *pískŭn* by the piles of rock on either side.

About the walls of the *pískŭn*, now full of buffalo, were distributed the women and children of the camp, who, leaning over the enclosure, waving their arms and calling out, did all they could to frighten the penned-in animals, and to keep them from pushing against the walls, or trying to jump or climb over them. As a rule, the buffalo raced round within the enclosure; and the men shot them down as they passed, until all were killed. After this the people all entered the *pískŭn*, and cut up the dead, transporting the meat to camp. The skulls, bones, and less perishable offal were removed from the enclosure; and the wolves, coyotes, foxes, and badgers devoured what was left.

It occasionally happened that something occurred to turn the buffalo, so that they passed through the guiding arms and escaped. Usually they went on straight to the angle, and jumped over the cliff into the enclosure below. In winter, when snow was on the ground, their straight course was made additionally certain by placing on or just above the snow, a line

of buffalo chips leading from the angle of the V, midway between its arms out on to the prairie. These dark objects, only twenty or thirty feet apart, were easily seen against the white snow; and the buffalo always followed them, no doubt thinking this a trail where another herd had passed.

By the *Siksikau* tribe of the Blackfoot nation and the Plains Crees, the *piskŭn* was built in a somewhat different way, but the methods employed were similar. With these people, who inhabited a flat country, the enclosure was built of logs and near a timbered stream. Its walls were complete; that is, there was no opening or gateway in them, but at one point this wall, elsewhere eight feet high, was cut away so that its height was only about four feet. From this point a bridge or causeway of logs, covered with dirt, sloped by a gradual descent down to the level of the prairie. This bridge was fenced on either side with logs, and the arms of the V came together at the point where the bridge reached the ground. The buffalo were driven down the chute as before, ran up on this bridge, and were forced to leap into the pen. As soon as all had entered, Indians who had been concealed near by ran up and put poles across the opening through

which the buffalo had passed; and over these poles hung robes, so as entirely to conceal the outer world. Then the butchering of the animals took place.

Farther to the south, out on the prairie, where timber and rocks and brush were not obtainable for making traps like these, simpler but less effective methods were adopted. The people would go out on the prairie, and conceal themselves in a great circle open on one side. Then some man would approach the buffalo, and decoy them into the circle. Men would now show themselves at different points, and start the buffalo running in a circle, yelling and waving robes to keep them from approaching, or trying to break through, the ring of men. This had to be done with great judgment, however; for often if the herd got started in one direction it was impossible to turn it, and it would rush through the ring, and none would be secured. Sometimes if a herd was found in a favorable position, and there was no wind, a large camp of people would set up their lodges all about the buffalo, in which case the chances of success in the surround were greatly increased.

The tribes which used the *pískŭn* also practised driving the buffalo over high,

rough cliffs, where the fall crippled or killed most of the animals which went over. In such situations, no enclosure was built at the foot of the precipice.

In the later days of the *pìskŭn* in the north, the man who brought the buffalo often went to them on horseback, riding a white horse. He would ride backward and forward before them, zig-zagging this way and that; and after a little they would follow him. He never attempted to drive, but always led them. The driving began only after the herd had passed the outer rock piles, and the people had begun to rise up and frighten them.

This method of securing meat has been practised in Montana within thirty years, and even more recently among the Plains Crees of the north. I have seen the remains of old *pìskŭns*, and the guiding wings of the chute, and have talked with many men who have taken part in such killings.

All this had to do, of course, with the primitive methods of buffalo killing. As soon as horses became abundant, and sheet-iron arrow-heads, and later, guns, were secured by the Indians, these old practices began to give way to the more exciting pursuit of running buffalo and of surrounding them on horseback. Of this modern

method, as practised twenty years ago, and exclusively with the bow and arrow, I have already written at some length in another place.

To the white travellers on the plains in early days the buffalo furnished support and sustenance. Their abundance made fresh meat readily obtainable; and the early travellers usually carried with them bundles of dried meat, or sacks of pemmican, food made from the flesh of the buffalo, that contained a great deal of nutriment in very small bulk. Robes were used for bedding; and in winter buffalo moccasins were worn for warmth, the hair side within. Coats of buffalo skin are the warmest covering known, the only garment which will present an effective barrier to the bitter blasts that sweep over the plains of the Northwest.

Perhaps as useful to early travellers as any product of the buffalo was the "buffalo chip," or dried dung. This, being composed of comminuted woody fibre of the grass, made an excellent fuel, and in many parts of the treeless plains was the only substance which could be used to cook with.

The dismal story of the extermination of the buffalo for its hides has been so

often told, that I may be spared the sickening details of the butchery which was carried on from the Mexican to the British boundary line in the struggle to obtain a few dollars by a most ignoble means. As soon as railroads penetrated the buffalo country, a market was opened for their hides. Men too lazy to work were not too lazy to hunt; and a good hunter could kill in the early days from thirty to seventy-five buffalo a day, the hides of which were worth from $1.50 to $4 each. This seemed an easy way to make money, and the market for hides was unlimited. Up to this time the trade in robes had been mainly confined to those dressed by the Indians, and these were for the most part taken from cows. The coming of the railroad made hides of all sorts marketable, and even those taken from naked old bulls found a sale at some price. The butchery of buffalo was now something stupendous. Thousands of hunters followed millions of buffalo, and destroyed them wherever found and at all seasons of the year. They pursued them during the day, and at night camped at the watering places, and built lines of fires along the streams, to drive the buffalo back so that they could not drink. It took less than six years to destroy all the

buffalo in Kansas, Nebraska, Indian Territory, and northern Texas. The few that were left of the southern herd retreated to the waterless plains of Texas, and there for a while had a brief respite. Even here the hunters followed them; but as the animals were few, and the territory in which they ranged vast, they held out here for some years. It was in this country, and against the very last survivors of this southern herd, that "Buffalo Jones" made his very successful trips to capture calves.

The extirpation of the northern herd was longer delayed. No very terrible slaughter occurred until the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad; then, however, the same scenes of butchery were enacted. Buffalo were shot down by tens of thousands, their hides stripped off, and the meat left to the wolves. The result of the crusade was soon seen: the last buffalo were killed in the Northwest near the boundary line, in 1883; and that year may be said to have finished up the species, though some few were killed in 1884 to 1885.

After the slaughter had been begun, but years before it had been accomplished, the subject was brought to the attention of Congress, and legislation looking to

the preservation of the species was urged upon that body. Little general interest was taken in the subject; but in 1874, after much discussion, Congress did pass an act providing for the protection of the buffalo. The bill, however, was never signed by the President.

During the last days of the buffalo, a remarkable change took place in its form; and this change is worthy of consideration by naturalists, for it is an example of specialization — of development in one particular direction — which was due to a change in the environment of the species; and it is interesting because it was brought about in a very few years, and indicates how rapidly, under favoring conditions, such specialization may take place.

This change was noticed and commented on by hunters who followed the northern buffalo, as well as by those who assisted in the extermination of the southern herd. The southern hunters, however, averred that the "regular" buffalo had disappeared, — gone off somewhere, — and that their place had been taken by what they called the southern buffalo, a race said to have come up from Mexico, and characterized by longer legs and a longer, lighter body than the buffalo of

earlier years, and which was also peculiar in that the animals never became fat. Intelligent hunters of the northern herd, however, recognized the true state of the case, which was that the buffalo, during the last years of their existence, were so constantly pursued and driven from place to place that they never had time to lay on fat as in earlier years, and that, as a consequence of this continual running, the animal's form changed, and instead of a fat, short-backed, short-legged animal, it became a long-legged, light-bodied beast, formed for running.

This specialization in the direction of speed at first proceeded very slowly; but at last, as the dangers to which the animals were subjected became more and more pressing, it took place rapidly, and as a consequence the last buffalo killed on the plains were extremely long-legged and rangy, and were very different in appearance — as they were in their habits — from the animals of twenty years ago.

Buffalo running was not a sport that required much skill, yet it was not without its dangers. Occasionally a man was killed by the buffalo, but deaths from falls and from bursting guns were more common. Many curious stories of such accidents are

told by the few real old-timers whose memory goes back fifty years, to the time when flint-lock guns were in use. A mere fall from a horse is lightly regarded by the practised rider; the danger to be feared is that in such a fall the horse may roll on the man and crush him. Even more serious accidents occurred when a man fell upon some part of his equipment, which was driven through his body. Hunters have fallen in such a way that their whip-stocks, arrows, bows, and even guns, have been driven through their bodies. The old flint-lock guns, or "fukes," which were loaded on the run, with powder poured in from the horn by guess, and a ball from the mouth, used frequently to burst, causing the loss of hands, arms, and even lives.

While most of the deaths which occurred in the chase resulted from causes other than the resistance of the buffalo, these did occasionally kill a man. A curious accident happened in a camp of Red River half-breeds in the early seventies. The son of an Iroquois half-breed, about twenty years old, went out one day with the rest of the camp to run buffalo. At night he did not return, and the next day all the men went out to search for him.

They found the horse and the arms, but could not find the man, and could not imagine what had become of him. About a year later, as the half-breeds were hunting in another part of the country, a cow was seen which had something unusual on her head. They chased and killed her, and found that she had on her head the pelvis of a man, one of the horns having pierced the thin part of the bone, which was wedged on so tightly that they could hardly get it off. Much of the hair on the head, neck, and shoulders of the cow was worn off short, and on the side on which the bone was, down on the neck and shoulders, the hair was short, black, and looked new, as if it had been worn entirely off the skin, and was just beginning to grow out again. It is supposed that this bone was part of the missing young man, who had been hooked by the cow, and carried about on her head until his body fell to pieces.

My valued friend, Charley Reynolds, who was for years chief of scouts at Fort Lincoln, Dak., and was killed by the Sioux in the Custer fight in 1876, told me of the death of a hunting partner of his, which shows how dangerous even a dying buffalo may be. The two men had

started from the railroad to go south, and bring in a load of meat. On finding a bunch of buffalo, they killed by stalking what they required, and then on foot went up to the animals to butcher them. One cow, lying on her side, was still moving a little convulsively, but dying. The man approached her as if about to cut her throat; but when he was within a few feet of her head, she sprang to her feet, rushed at him, struck him in the chest with her horns, and then fell dead. Charley ran up to his partner, and to his horror saw that the cow's horn had ripped him up from the belly to the throat, so that he could see the heart still expanding and contracting. Charley buried his partner there, and returning to the town, told his story. He was at once arrested on the charge that he had murdered his companion, and was obliged to return to the place and to assist in digging up the body to establish the truth of his statements.

In the early days when the game was plenty, buffalo running was exhilarating sport. Given a good horse, the buffalo hunter's only other requisite to success was the ability to remain on its back till the end of the chase. No greater degree of skill was needed than this; and yet the

quick motion of the horse, the rough ground to be traversed, and the feeling that there was something ahead that must be overtaken and stopped, made the ride attractive. There was the very slightest spice of danger; for while no one anticipated an accident, it was possible that one's horse might step into a badger hole, in which case his rider would get a fall that would make his bones ache.

The most exciting, and by far the most interesting, hunts in which I ever took part were those with the Indians of the plains. They were conducted almost noiselessly; and no ring of rifle-shot broke the stillness of the air, nor puff of smoke rose toward the still, gray autumn sky. The consummate grace and skill of the naked Indians, and the speed and quickness of their splendid ponies, were well displayed in such chases as these. More than one instance is recorded where an Indian has sent an arrow entirely through the bodies of two buffalo. Sometimes such a hunt was signalized by some feat of daring bravado that, save in the seeing, was scarcely credible, as when the Cheyenne Big Ribs rode his horse close up to the side of a huge bull, and, springing on his back, rode the savage beast for some distance,

and then with his knife gave it its death-stroke. Or a man might find himself in a position of comical danger, as did "The Trader" who was thrown from his horse on to the horns of a bull without being injured. One of the horns passed under his belt and supported him, and at the same time prevented the bull from tossing him. In this way he was carried for some distance on the animal's head, when the belt gave way and he fell to the ground unhurt, while the bull ran on. There were occasions when buffalo or horses fell in front of horsemen riding at full run, and when a fall was avoided only by leaping one's horse over the fallen animal. In the buffalo chase of old days it was well for a man to keep his wits about him; for, though he might run buffalo a thousand times without accident, the moment might come when only instant action would save him his life, or at least an ugly hurt.

In the early days of the first Pacific Railroad, and before the herds had been driven back from the track, singular hunting parties were sometimes seen on the buffalo range. These hunters were capitalists connected with the newly constructed roads; and some of them now for the first

The Last of the Buffalo



Going to Water

time bestrode a horse, while few had ever used fire-arms. On such a hunt, one well-known railroad director, eager to kill a buffalo, declined to trust himself on horseback, preferring to bounce over the rough prairie in an ambulance driven by an alarmed soldier, who gave less attention to the mules he was guiding than to the loaded and cocked pistol which his excited passenger was brandishing.

It was on the plains of Montana, in the days when buffalo were still abundant, that I had one of my last buffalo hunts — a hunt with a serious purpose. A company of fifty or more men, who for weeks had been living on bacon and beans, longed for the "boss ribs" of fat cow; and when we struck the buffalo range two of us were deputed to kill some meat. My companion was an old prairie man of great experience, and I myself was not altogether new to the West; for I had hunted in many territories, and had more than once been "jumped" by hostile Indians. Our horses were not buffalo runners, yet we felt a certain confidence that if we could find a bunch and get a good start on them, we would bring in the desired meat. The troops would march during the day; for the commanding officer had no notion of

waiting in camp merely for fresh meat, and we were to go out, hunt, and overtake the command at their night's camp.

The next day after we had reached the buffalo range we started out long before the eastern sky was gray, and were soon riding off over the chilly prairie. The trail which the command was to follow ran a little north of east; and we kept to the south and away from it, believing that in this direction we would find the game, and that if we started them they would run north or northwest, against the wind, so that we could kill them near the trail. Until some time after the sun had risen we saw nothing larger than antelope; but at length, from the top of a high hill, we could see far away to the east dark dots on the prairie, which we knew could only be buffalo. They were undisturbed too; for, though we watched them for some time, we could detect no motion in their ranks.

It took us nearly two hours to reach the low, broken buttes on the north side of which the buffalo were; and, riding up on the easternmost of these, we tried to locate our game more exactly. It was important to get as close as possible before starting them, so that our first rush might

carry us into the midst of them. Know-the capabilities of our horses, which were thin from long travel, we felt sure that if the buffalo should take the alarm before we were close to them, we could not overtake the cows and young animals which always run in the van, and should have to content ourselves with old bulls. On the other hand, if we could dash in among them during the first hundred yards of the race, we should be able to keep up with and select the fattest animals in the herd.

When we reached a point just below the crest of the hill, I stopped and waited, while Charley, my companion, rode on. Just before he got to the top he too halted, then took off his hat and peered over the ridge, examining so much of the prairie beyond as was now visible to him. His inspection was careful and thorough; and when he had made sure that nothing was in sight, his horse took a step or two forward and then stopped again, and the rider scanned every foot of country before him. The horse, trained as the real hunter's horse is always trained, understood what was required of him, and with pricked ears examined the prairie beyond with as much interest as did his rider. When the calf of Charley's right leg pressed the horse's

side, two or three steps more were taken, and then a lifting of the bridle hand caused another halt.

At length I saw my companion slowly bend forward over his horse's neck, turn, and ride back to me. He had seen the backs of two buffalo lying on the edge of a little flat hardly a quarter of a mile from where we stood. The others of the band must be still nearer to us. By riding along the lowest part of the sag which separated the two buttes, and then down a little ravine, it seemed probable that we could come within a few yards of the buffalo unobserved. Our preparations did not take long. The saddle cinches were loosened, blankets arranged, saddles put in their proper places and tightly cinched again. Cartridges were brought round to the front and right of the belt, where they would be convenient for reloading. Our coats tied behind the saddle were looked to, the strings which held them being tightened and securely retied. All this was not lost on our horses, which understood as well as we did what was coming. We skirted the butte, rode through the low sag and down into the little ravine, which soon grew deeper, so that our heads were below the range of vision of almost anything on

the butte. Passing the mouth of the little side ravine, however, there came into full view a huge bull lying well up on the hillside. Luckily his back was toward us; and, each bending low over his horse's neck, we rode on, and in a moment were hidden by the side of the ravine. Two or three minutes more, and we came to another side ravine, which was wide and commanded a view of the flat. We stopped before reaching this, and a peep showed that we were within a few yards of two old cows, a young heifer, and a yearling, all of them to the north of us. Beyond, we could see the backs of others, all lying down.

We jumped on our horses again, and, setting the spurs well in, galloped up the ravine and out on the flat; and as we came into view the nearest buffalo, as if propelled by a huge spring, were on their feet, and, with a second's pause to look, dashed away to the north. Scattered over the flat were fifty or seventy-five buffalo, all of which, by the time we had glanced over the field, were off, with heads hanging low to the ground, and short, spiky tails stretched out behind. We were up even with the last of the cows; and our horses were running easily, and seemed to have plenty of reserve

power. Charley, who was a little ahead of me, called back, "They will cross the trail about a mile north of here. Kill a couple when we get to it." I nodded, and we went on. The herd raced forward over the rolling hills; and in what seemed a very short time we rushed down a long slope on to a wide flat, in which was a prairie-dog town of considerable extent. We were on the very heels of the herd, and in a cloud of dust kicked up by their rapid flight. To see the ground ahead was impossible. We could only trust to our horses and our good luck to save us from falling. Our animals were doing better than we had supposed they could, and were going well and under a pull. I felt that a touch of the spurs and a little riding would bring us up even with the leaders of the buffalo. The pace had already proved too much for several bulls, which had turned off to one side and been passed by. As we flew across the flat, I saw far off a dark line and two white objects, which I knew must be our command. I called to my comrade, and, questioning by the sign, pointed at the buffalo. He nodded; and in a moment we had given free rein to our horses, and were up among the herd. During the ride I had two or three

times selected my game, but the individuals of the band changed positions so constantly that I could not keep track of them. Now, however, I picked out a fat two-year-old bull; but as I drew up to him he ran faster than before, and rapidly made his way toward the head of the band. I was resolved that he should not escape; and so, though still fifteen or twenty yards in the rear, I fired. At the shot he fell heels over head directly across a cow, which was running by his side and a little behind him. I saw her turn a somersault, and almost at the same instant heard Charley shoot twice in quick succession, and saw two buffalo fall. I fired at a fat young cow, that I had pushed my pony up close to. At the shot she whirled, my horse did the same, and she chased me as hard as she could go for seventy-five yards, while I did some exceedingly vigorous spurring, for she was close behind me all the time. To do my horse justice, I think that he would have run as fast as he could, even without the spurs, for he appreciated the situation. At no time was there any immediate danger that the cow would over-overtake us; if there had been, I should have dodged her. Presently the cow stopped, and stood there very sick. When

I rode back I did not find it easy to get my horse near her; but another shot was not needed, and while I sat looking at her, she fell over dead. The three buffalo first killed had fallen within a hundred yards of the trail where the wagons afterward passed, and my cow was but little farther away. The command soon came up, the soldiers did the butchering, and before long we were on the march again.

Of the millions of buffalo which even in our own time ranged the plains in freedom, none now remain. From the prairies which they used to darken, the wild herds, down to the last straggling bull, have disappeared. In the Yellowstone National Park, protected from destruction by United States troops, are the only wild buffalo which exist within the borders of the United States. These are mountain buffalo; and, from their habit of living in the thick timber and on the rough mountain sides, they are only now and then seen by visitors to the Park. It is impossible to say just how many there are; but from the best information that I can get, based on the estimates of reliable and conservative men, I conclude that the number was not less than four hundred in the winter of 1891–1892. Each winter or

spring the Government scout employed in the Park sees one or more herds of these buffalo; and as such herds are usually made up in part of young animals and have calves with them, it is fair to assume that they are steadily if slowly increasing. The report of a trip made in January, 1892, speaks of four herds seen in the Hayden Valley, which numbered respectively 78, 50, 110, and 15. Besides these, a number of single animals and of scattering groups were seen at a distance, which would perhaps bring the total number up to three hundred. Of course, it is not to be supposed that all the buffalo in the Park were at that time collected in this one valley.

In the far Northwest, in the Peace River district, there may still be found a few wood buffalo. Judging from reports of them which occasionally reach us from Indians and Hudson's Bay men, their habits resemble those of the European bison. They are seldom killed, and the estimate of their numbers varies from five hundred to fifteen hundred. This cannot be other than the merest guess; since they are scattered over many thousand square miles of territory which is without inhabitants, and for the most part unexplored.

On the great plains is still found the

buffalo skull half buried in the soil and crumbling to decay. The deep trails once trodden by the marching hosts are grass-grown now, and fast filling up. When these most enduring relics of a vanished race shall have passed away, there will be found, in all the limitless domain once darkened by their feeding herds, not one trace of the American buffalo.

POSTSCRIPT, 1896.

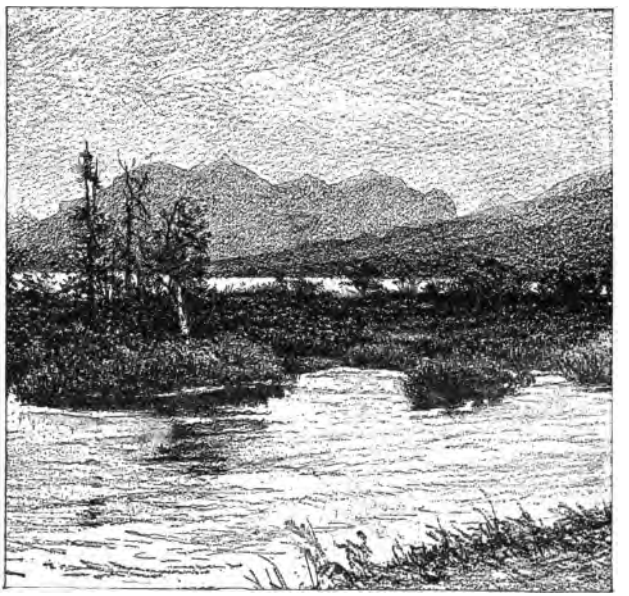
Since this estimate was made, the number of buffalo in the Yellowstone Park has seriously diminished. Up to May, 1894, there had never been any law governing this reservation. By the organic Park act the Secretary of the Interior was authorized to establish regulations for the care and government of the reservation, but no power to enforce them was given him. The troops detailed to protect the Park had authority only to arrest and eject from it violators of the regulations who could at once return to the Park if they chose. The lawless element in the neighborhood of the reservation learned that offences could not be punished; and in the years 1892, 1893, and 1894, poachers destroyed great numbers of buffalo and other game. In May, 1894, Congress passed a law es-

tablishing a government for the Park, and since then a number of offenders have been punished. This law was enacted, however, too late to save the buffalo of the Park; and their numbers there are believed to be now very small, perhaps not more than fifty.

The principal herds of domesticated buffalo in private hands in 1896 are the Allard herd, which includes parts of the Jones and Bedson herds, and numbered in the autumn of 1895 about 200; the Corbin herd in New Hampshire, about 75; the Carlin herd in South Dakota, 23; and the Good-night herd in Texas about 40. Besides these there are, of course, the buffalo at the different Zoölogical Gardens in the country, which may number 50 or more.

AT SAINT MARY'S

By Harry C. Hale



In this Beautiful Valley we went into Camp.

PERMANENT camp had finally been made, and our four "conical walls" were pitched on the immediate bank of the St. Mary's River, a few hundred yards from the point where that stream gives outlet to the waters of the upper St. Mary's Lake.

The river flowed, swift and cold, past our very doors; and from the latter we looked out to the south, and feasted our eyes on Divide, Kootenai, and Red Eagle

Mountains, each noted for some remarkable incident, the story of which we had been many times told already by our loquacious guide, who had joined our party two days before.

Ten days or so previous to this, had one been spending a day at the military post of Fort Assiniboine, Mont., — which one never does, — he might have seen departing therefrom a column of dusky horsemen, followed by several six-mule teams drawing heavy red wagons, and headed by two suspicious-looking men on horses branded "U.S."

The horsemen were a detachment of "F" Troop, Tenth United States Cavalry; the wagon-train consisted of four "army wagons complete;" and the two evil-looking men at the head of the column were myself and a much better man, Lieutenant Letcher Hardeman of the Tenth Regiment United States Cavalry.

This party left the post one hot day late in the summer of 1894; and seven days later, having made an interesting march over two hundred miles of Montana soil, it appeared at Blackfoot station on the Great Northern Railroad. There it was joined by a party of eight gentlemen who had arrived that day on the west-bound

train; and from there the united parties proceeded toward the Rocky Mountains, which, looming up in the hazy air, fogged by smoke from the numerous prairie fires, looked big and formidable, and but a stone's throw away.

But a good part of three days were consumed in reaching those mountains. Though they did seem near at 'hand, they proved to be fifty miles distant by road.

On the third day an early camp was made on the St. Mary's River; and as this seemed to be about as far as wagons could go in these parts, here we concluded to make our permanent headquarters during our week's sojourn in these mountains.

And so, with our tent doors facing the stream and but twenty feet away from its waters, here in this beautiful valley we went into camp and were happy.

Preparations were immediately made for sport. Rods, reels, and lines were soon assembled, shotguns unpacked, belts filled with ammunition; and in an hour the enthusiastic sportsmen of the party were enjoying themselves with that intense pleasure known only to the eager angler or hunter when he finds himself in a preserve rich with his especial game.

But of that party two members were not

out for fish or small game. Hardeman and I had decided at the outset to kill a Rocky Mountain sheep, — a "big horn;" and not only had we so decided, but we had so asserted. We might condescend to catch a few trout or to shoot a few grouse in our spare moments, — *pour passer le temps*, — but the business of our life while in these mountains would be mutton — wild mutton.

The members of our party were nice gentlemen, and treated our youthful vaporings with a serious attention that pleased us. Even our guide, a thirteen-year resident of this locality, did not smile; but contented himself with saying that he had known "a few gentlemen to miss them sheep at thirty yards the first time they got a shot at them," but that he guessed "these West Point boys knew how to shoot a gun, and how to keep their nerve when in sight of big game."

We came to know more about that guide and "nerve" and things later on.

But it did seem ridiculous to hear of a man's getting a shot at a mark the size of a sheep, and missing it at fifty yards. The wonder was how he *could* miss at all — where his bullet could go and not hit — at that range. We were not troubled.

Give us a shot anywhere within one, yes, two, hundred yards, and we would answer for the result. Had we not been qualifying as sharpshooters in our regiments for several years past? Had we not already demonstrated to our party our skill in aiming and our accuracy in judging distance by breaking innumerable bottles as they floated down the streams on which we had camped *en route?*

As to "losing our nerve" — oh, well, that was simply absurd. We were not troubled.

The day after our arrival in camp was Sunday, and a day of rest (we numbered two clergymen among us); but two of the party returning in the evening from a climb over the nearest mountain, Flat Top, raised our hopes to a high degree by telling us of six sheep they had seen on their ride.

Monday morning Hardeman and I started for Flat Top.

We were armed with the regulation Springfield carbine, and each wore a field-belt full of ammunition. A field-belt holds forty rounds, and when full is heavy. But it was well, we thought, to go on such an expedition well equipped. We reasoned how badly we should feel, if, having exhausted our supply, we ran on to more

game. Oh, no, it would not do to go without plenty of ammunition. So we left no vacant thimbles in our belts.

When mounted and ready to start, our guide pointed out the direction to be taken, and assured us that we could not possibly get lost; for, after reaching the timber, we would follow a "plain, blazed trail, clean up."

Then, as he wished us good luck, he smiled.

There was a drizzling rain. It was early in the morning, and cold. The grass was high in the ravines; and by the time we had reached the lower line of timber we were wet through as high as the waist, and not dry above. We now entered the thick timber, and the upper half of the body began to feel the dampening effect of the numerous shower-baths shaken from dripping boughs above.

Ten minutes from the time of our entrance into the timber, we were lost; and from this time on, for the next hour and a half, it was a game of hide-and-go-seek between us and that "plain, blazed trail," and Hardeman and I were always "It."

But stumbling over the fallen trees, interlaced and crossed in inextricable confusion, winding in and out among the

standing timber, getting a leg scraped here, a knee struck there, now leading our horses up a steep incline, now riding them with a delicious sense of rest over a level bit of trail for a few hundred yards — so we plodded along, and finally reached the upper timber-line, emerging from the gloom of the forest into the cheerful light of the open, and leaving very willingly behind us both our "plain, blazed trail" and the necessity for it.

But we had not reached the top of the mountain yet by any means; and the question now presented itself, — which direction to take. We had come out of the wood near the wedgelike end of Flat Top. Should we turn to our right, and pass around the jutting spur to the farther side of the mountain, or should we keep on the side where we were, and take our way to the left? Hardeman, who had with his Indian scouts done considerable mountain trailing in Arizona, and was just in his element now, proposed to do neither, but to climb straight to the top from where we were. Accordingly we dismounted, and then ensued the most difficult piece of infantry work I ever took part in. But we persevered, panting and struggling, slipping and recovering, but always going

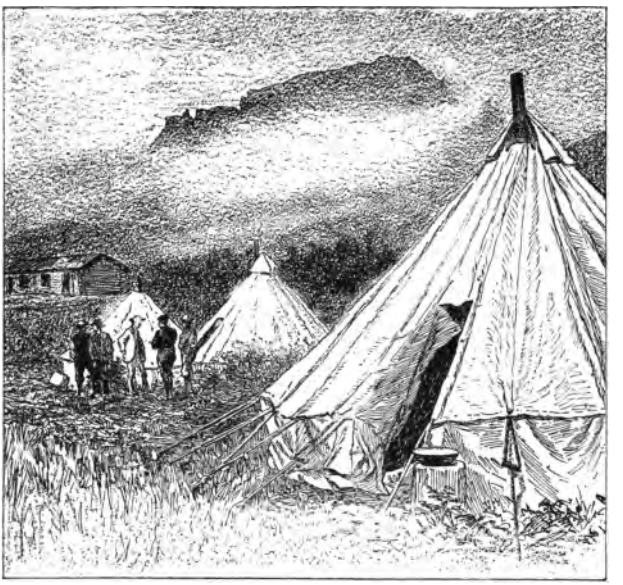
up. Our horses, led with long, loose rein, impeded us but little, picking their way along our foot-tracks with precaution and precision. They seemed to feel the effect of the rarefied air more than we; their breathing came short and quick. We were nearly seven thousand feet high.

We finally reached the top, only to find that the rocks made it impracticable for mounted work; so we tied our horses, wishing we had left them down at the timber-line.

A short rest, and we started afoot along the summit of the long mountain. Not knowing the habits of the game we were seeking, we had no definite idea as to the best method of hunting it. Well, we would just clamber along over these mountains, and trust to luck to fall in with something in the course of the day. The clouds were hanging low and thick; we were surrounded by them, in fact, and our field of vision was limited to a narrow circle.

An hour of this mountain travel, — down dale and up slope, through the long, wet grass, over the jagged rock and the treacherous shale, — an hour of this, and we were ready for a rest.

We sat down within the edge of a growth of pine on the side of a gentle



A Temporary Camp.

slope of shale, which swept up to a long ridge a quarter of a mile away. As the clouds would occasionally rise above or drop below this ridge, it would stand for a few moments clearly outlined against the sky; and it was during one of these intervals that, in sweeping the ridge with my glass, I thought I saw a movement in an object which till then I had taken for a bush or a rock. Lowering my glasses, and resting my eyes a moment, I looked again. The object had disappeared.

It was a sheep. Without doubt it was

a sheep. Our plans were soon formed. We would keep within the timber as long as possible, and moving well off to our left, approach them just below the line of the ridge, always keeping between their position and ours a clump of fir-brush which we could discern in the immediate vicinity of the spot where I had made the discovery.

We started at a rapid gait, all fatigue forgotten. We had not gone a hundred yards when we came upon the place where the band had slept the night before. Up to this time I think Hardeman had been rather sceptical as to whether I had really seen any game; but now his eye lighted up, as he realized that we were really in the immediate neighborhood of the game we sought.

The prettiest little beds imaginable these animals had made for themselves. Round, shallow basins were scooped out of the loose shale here and there; and so smooth they appeared, with the small, flat pieces of rock forming them, that they really gave one the idea of being soft.

My imagination depicted the sheep reaching this spot the evening before, an old ram in the lead. I saw them stop, and busy themselves in selecting and preparing

their resting-places for the night. One by one they curled themselves in their cosey beds, made soft by their own thick coats of hair. What would I not give to have been there in person, to have watched and studied them in the morning, and — and — my mind suddenly dropping me down to earth — to know just where they were at this instant.

As we began to near the line of the ridge we recognized the necessity of extreme care in picking our way, lest the sound of our footfalls in the loose shale should be heard. We were making great efforts to tread noiselessly; and we were constantly reminded that our attempts were a signal failure by hearing the disturbed pieces of rock rolling from under our feet, down, down, hundreds of yards below. One of these little demons would start on its downward course, — the one of us that had started it always receiving a withering look from the other, — and, rolling at first slowly and smoothly, then bounding with a gentle tink-tinkle from one point to another, it would speed on, gathering impetus in its flight, and, like a bad boy on a lark, picking up many companions as it went, until finally the flight of this one little stone would become a mad rush of

tumbling rock, and the pretty tinkling had increased to a roar, which to our over-sensitive ears seemed loud enough to awaken the very mountains themselves.

Eventually the whole mass would find its resting-place in the valley below; and then we would cease grating our teeth in impotent rage, and creep on.

We finally reached the ridge, cautiously approached our point selected, and peered over.

Nothing.

Disappointed, but not very surprised, we passed on to a parallel ridge, a hundred yards farther, which until now had been hidden from view.

Again nothing. But stop!

Simultaneously we inclined our heads in a listening attitude. The far-distant tinkle of rolling shale — a sound the significance of which we were quick to appreciate — met our ears. My glasses were out in an instant; and a moment later I passed them to my companion, directing him as I did so to a point in the valley hundreds of feet below. There, strung out in single file, were eight Rocky Mountain sheep. They were moving straight up the bed of a dry ravine which headed, a few hundred yards on, between two vertical cliffs.

The temptation was strong to run up our sights, and take a chance shot; but they were practically out of range, and the noise would decrease the chances of our seeing them later on. How beautiful and how much to be desired did they appear to us, and how supremely secure did they seem to consider themselves! They would trot a short distance, then stop and look up in our direction, then on again, in single file always, never bunched, until finally, turning off to the right of the ravine, they proceeded to perform some wonderful gymnastics by taking their way up what seemed to be a perfectly vertical cliff, going from one ledge to another by a series of the easiest and most graceful leaps imaginable.

Half-way up the cliff they stopped, and to our surprise began placidly grazing, as though no enemy was within a hundred miles. So far as securing them from where we were, we might, indeed, have been a hundred miles distant. We were separated from them by a deep valley, and any movement that way would be certain to attract their attention.

No, there was no doubt that they had heard and seen us, — saw us now probably; and the only thing left for us to do was

to go back over the ridge, keep below it on the farther side, pass clear around the head of the intervening valley, and, coming in from the opposite side, creep up to the edge of the cliff to a point directly above where our foolish mutton was so peacefully grazing.

It appeared but a short walk to our goal, yet two hours were consumed in making the distance. In order to keep ourselves concealed from view during this brilliant manœuvre, we necessarily lost sight of our game; but as we neared our destination, and made our stealthy, four-footed way to the edge of the cliff, we were confident that they would be where last seen, and we prepared to drop our cartridges down among them like a shower of hailstones. We ought to get every one.

But we did not. They had not waited for us. We could not explain it, and we did not try. We cast a few rocks down on to the ledge where we had last seen them so unsuspectingly browsing, "just to see," as Hardeman said, "how dead easy they would have been;" and then, in silence, we took up our carbines, and started to retrace our steps campward.

The weariness of limb which we had felt just before I made the unfortunate dis-

covery of the sheep on the ridge, and which had been forgotten from then till now, suddenly returned with redoubled intensity. Our carbines were heavy; and we concluded, too, that to carry an excess of ammunition, forty rounds for instance, on a trip like this, was simply absurd. Well, we were learning fast; and with this comforting thought to cheer us, we plodded on in silence. We were very glad, in a despondent sort of way, when we reached our horses.

We needed no "plain, blazed trail" to follow on the homeward trip; our horses, with a wonderful intelligence, took us at a rapid gait straight back over the trail we had followed coming up. At first we often thought we knew better than our beasts, and turned them right when they would go left; but as every time we did this we were forced to retrace our steps to the point where we had turned off, and give in to our horses' better judgment, we soon learned to let them have their own way, and from that time on we never left the trail.

Late that night we reached camp, and first of all sought the guide. We wished to have a little talk with him about "plain, blazed trails." We found him, had our

talk, and then, feeling relieved and in a better mood, ate a tremendous supper, and betook ourselves to our tent.

We were weary and sore, but more determined than ever to get a sheep. "We will go straight back to-morrow and bag them sure," said I, as I rolled myself in my blanket that night.

"We will," said my companion, falling into an audible sleep.

The next day, Tuesday, broke bright and warm; and at an early hour we were on our way. It proved to be a most uninteresting chase; we saw no game, though we worked hard to find it. Again we returned to camp empty-handed.

As our party sat discussing the next day's programme that night, after dinner was finished and cigars were lighted, it appeared that three of the gentlemen wished to go to Red Eagle Lake, some ten or more miles distant, to try their luck at catching some of the wonderfully large trout said to abound there. Their intention was to take a camping outfit along, and remain over night.

The "sheep-chasers," as Hardeman and I were now called, having had enough of Flat Top, proposed to accompany this party, intending to make a side trip from

the camp on the lake to a near mountain, "Kootenai," where, according to our guide, we were "sure, dead sure," to get a shot at some sheep.

The next morning found us up with the dawn, and busy making preparations for the journey. Two docile mules were picked out from the herd, *aparejos* were adjusted, camping outfit packed, and at an early hour we started.

Three hours of tedious travelling, through timber very similar to that on Flat Top, brought us to a beautiful park near the lake. Camp was quickly pitched and quickly deserted; the anglers heading for the lake, my friend and I toddling along in the footsteps of the guide, bound for a "sheep-lick" some two miles distant, where, we were repeatedly assured, we would get "plenty of mutton, all right."

We had appropriated the guide to ourselves this day. He had told us so much about the abundance of sheep on this Kootenai Mountain, that we forgave him for his "plain, blazed trail" story of two days before, and consented to let him show us the place.

He led us a hard march for an hour and a half; but our last two days of climbing had accustomed our muscles to the un-

usual exercise, and so, when we were finally warned to "tread keerful" as we were approaching the lick, we were nearly as fresh as when we started out. For the next quarter of a mile we were fully occupied in attempting to tread "keerful," our hob-nailed shoes and the slippery rocks combating us at every step.

For some time we had been skirting the mountain above the timber-line for better walking. Now the guide led us just inside the wood for concealment; and soon rounding a projecting crag, and ascending a wooden spur running down the mountain-side, we found ourselves peering through the trees into a large, shallow basin, treeless and rocky, and several hundred yards across. Here and there in this open could be discovered white patches of earthy shale, and these were the sheep-licks which we were seeking. They were merely spots where salts exuded to the surface from beneath, or were washed down by seepage from above; but our guide had informed us that when one once found a lick he had a sure thing, as the game of the surrounding country constantly visited the place to satisfy their natural taste for the salts found there.

Cautiously we parted the boughs and

peered forth. We sought long and earnestly among the rocks for any indications of game, but with no result. To secure a better view we gradually crept forward, until at last we stood where we commanded the whole basin.

Nothing — absolutely nothing.

We could scarcely believe it. We had counted so much on this effort. But we soon realized that our guide's prognostications had proven incorrect, and we were angry.

For a time nothing was said; then the guide, seeing the gloom on our faces, evidently thought it best to say something in explanation. What he did say did not put us in a better humor. He simply could not understand it, that was all. He had always found them there before, and he did not see why they were not there now.

We said nothing, but sat down to rest from that remarkable fatigue which always attacked us immediately on the heels of a disappointment.

I fell a-thinking. It really did appear to be a favorable place for game. By lying under cover and waiting, we might yet get a shot. But we were some distance from camp, and the afternoon was fast passing; we would have but little time

to spare. The idea of remaining all night was not entirely satisfactory; as we had nothing to eat, and nothing to cover ourselves with during the long, cold hours after sunset. But this was fast getting to be a serious matter with us, this sheep-chase; and it did seem that if we were ever to secure a prize at all, now was our chance. We would remain.

The proposition was promptly agreed to by Hardeman, and the guide was told to return to camp to let the rest of the party know of our plans.

"Gets pretty cold at night," said the guide, pointing to a mass of snow lying on the mountain-side a few feet above us.

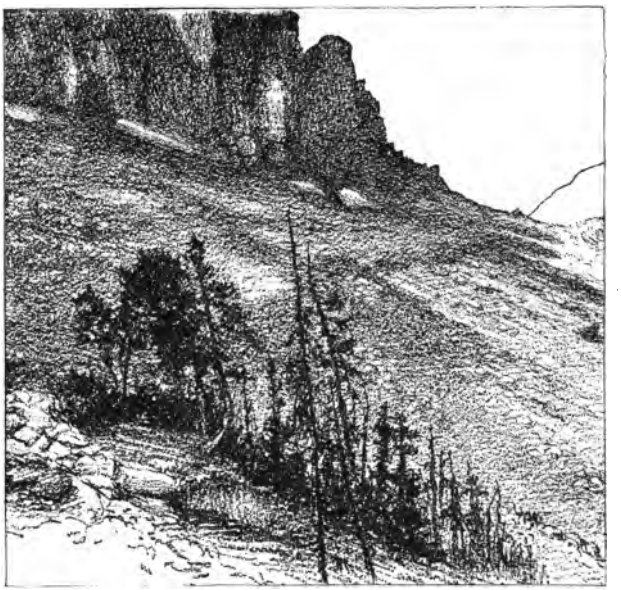
We made no reply.

"Anything to eat with you?" pursued the man, evidently dissatisfied with the turn events were taking.

Our heads shook in unison a negative reply.

He turned and left us.

To our right, and at some distance above us, was a commanding position well covered with the usual scrubby, low-lying fir. From here we judged we would be able to get a view of the whole basin below us; and here we now took our places, some distance apart, Hardeman on my



A Sheep "Lick."

right watching all approaches from his side, I keeping a lookout to the left.

The mosquitoes and mountain-flies were terrible; and had it not been for the vile-smelling mosquito "dope," which we carried and used, we could scarcely have withstood the pests.

We watched and waited, but without reward. Several hours passed; and the sun, shining full in our faces, dropped lower and lower. From the valley below came stealing toward us the shadows of the

western peaks, blighting all they touched with their darkened shapes, turning the silver of the mountain streams to ink, veiling the forest with a hood of gloom, silently, relentlessly creeping up the slopes, — higher and higher, — until at last they entered our shelter, and sought us out. The air grew chill; the leaves dropped motionless.

The sun had set; it was night.

Weary and stiff, and rather disgusted with sheep-hunting as a means of sport, we now betook ourselves to the timber below, and began making preparations for the night.

Selecting a smooth bit of ground, we covered it with twigs of pine, chopped with our hunting-knives from the surrounding trees. At the foot of our improvised bed we built a fire; and its cheerful warmth soon put us in better humor, and made our eyelids heavy as well. We fell asleep, and slept soundly until we slipped into the fire, which may have been ten minutes after slumber overtook us. Hardeman and I were good travelling companions, each making a point of always doing his part of the work, and undergoing his half of the privations. I suppose that this is the reason that neither of us, as he

picked himself out of the fire, evinced any surprise at seeing the other doing the same. Our bed, though smooth, was sloping, the pine-needles were slippery, and the fire was at the lower end of the bed. We had fallen asleep at the same time, side by side, began our unconscious sliding race to the fire, and had come in together, neither claiming any advantage at the finish.

"A dead heat," suggested Hardeman, as with one hand he fanned his ankle with the frayed flap of his trouser leg, and with the other he ceased touching the sole of his shoe, which was filled with hob-nails lately heated in the fire.

We discussed the idea of watching by reliefs after this, but concluded that of the two evils we preferred taking chances with the fire; and so, climbing back to our bed, we curled up "spoon fashion," and again fell asleep. To me it was a night of sleeping moments and waking hours, of toasted feet and frozen back; but with all the discomfort it was not unpleasant, lying there on the soft bed, inhaling the delicious fragrance of the resinous pine, and looking up through the motionless leaves to the starlit sky above. All nature seemed, like us, to have gone

to bed, so quiet was the night. During one of my waking spells the moon came out from behind a towering crag. Its white light covered the forest and all about us, and made the cheerful glow of the fire appear a flickering red. Its rays slowly passed from peak to peak, from cliff to cliff, leaving in the recesses grewsome shadows, and lighting up and bringing nearer the projecting rocks. A huge snow-bank on the mountain-side was sought out, and made to do its part in illuminating the night with its countless numbers of sparkling jewels. The marmots came out from their homes in the rocks; and their shrill whistling soon filled the night-air, echoing back and forth from wall to wall, and sounding weird and uncanny to the ear.

No, on the whole, that was not an unpleasant night; and when dawn appeared, and roused me out of my waking dreams, it was almost with a shock that I remembered where I was, and the practical nature of the cause of my being there.

Long before sunrise we were in our hiding-place of the evening before, shivering with the cold, and parrying, with cautious movements, the repeated attacks of the mosquitoes.

Ten o'clock found us still in place, with nothing to show for our pains.

But that hour brought the guide with our breakfast; and as he approached us straight across the basin, we considered further concealment useless, and went out to meet him. We sat down and ate, the guide meanwhile telling us that he did not understand the fact of there being no sheep there, and occasionally causing derisive smiles to pass between Hardeman and myself, by pointing to various spots where former hunters, trusting to his leadership, had gotten so many sheep. We considered these fairy-tales. Suddenly, with an exclamation, "Here they come," the guide jumped up, and ran behind a large rock near by, making motion and sound enough, it seemed to me, to attract the attention of all of the animal kingdom within a mile. Hardeman and I showed our nerve (and were exceedingly surprised at each other for it) by not moving a muscle. Gradually we lowered ourselves, and then, by slow, cautious wriggling, managed to conceal ourselves behind the rock in a sportsman-like manner. Then, and not till then, did we venture to look up in the direction the guide was pointing. There, standing on a projecting

ledge on the very tip-top of Kootenai, were six beautiful clear-cut figures against the sky. They were "big horns." They had not seen us evidently; but I shall never understand how they missed the gymnastics of that guide when he discovered them and jumped for cover.

Would they come down? And, if they came down, would they chance to approach us near enough for a shot? Oh that we were back in our old cover where we commanded the approaches from above. We felt we were out of luck indeed. For hours and hours we patiently lie in a specially chosen spot and not a lamb appears; but within five minutes after we come out of concealment to a place where we can make no movement without being seen, and near which the game is not likely to approach — then, suddenly, the mountains are covered with sheep.

Yes, we seemed to be in hard luck.

We waited. We were well concealed, and near one of the many licks. Just possibly this would be the lick preferred by our wary mutton.

Finally a movement was noticeable among them, and then one of them began slowly descending the precipitous side of Kootenai. Another and another followed,

until all were winding their way downward. Cautiously, suspiciously, they came, the leader halting every few steps, and leaving the trail to perch himself in a commanding position on some projecting ledge, there to take an exhaustive look over the rocks below. At each of these halts I held my breath in suspense, fearful that some unusual sound might startle our game, and set them all running.

But down they came, nearer and nearer. Would they turn as they reached the basin, and seek the nearest lick? If so, we would not get a shot, for we could never get within range without being seen.

We watched with painful intensity as they approached this lick. Slowly they came, daintily picking their way over the jagged rocks, never a misstep, and scarcely a sound. They neared the turning-point, reached it, and, without an instant's hesitation, the leader passed on, taking the straight trail leading in our direction. We looked at each other eloquently; they were as good as ours. They had finally gotten to within about three hundred yards from us when they became hidden from view. We stood this state of things for a moment or two; and then the suspense became too great, and we left our shelter with

the intention of ascending the slope of a small spur or ridge near us. Over that spur we should now be able to see our game. We started out, creeping very, very cautiously. The slope was steep, and we had difficulty in going up without disturbing the rock.

"Look!"

Bang! Bang!

Six badly frightened and unhurt "big horns" were scampering over the rocks.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! A perfect fusillade rang out. Over a ridge and around a crag disappeared six leaping forms.

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It had taken about thirty seconds. Suddenly, as we were nearing the top of the ridge, the animals had appeared on our left, had immediately seen us, and stopped. I had seen them as they appeared, had had but one idea, — that they would get away if not instantly shot, — had called out, and turning, as I half knelt, half lay, on the slope, had fired off-hand, and — missed. Hardeman had done the same thing. We had then both jumped up, and fired a half-dozen bullets in the general direction of the fleeing game, without in the slightest

degree taking aim. The frightened but unhurt animals had disappeared; and we now found ourselves looking at each other in a dazed sort of way, not just realizing for a second what had taken place. But it dawned on us soon enough.

Hardeman broke the silence.

"Why, they were not more than fifty yards away," said he in an incredulous tone; then, as the full extent of the calamity broke upon him, he shrieked, "Great Heavens, man! We have missed them! We have missed them, I tell you." I was aware of this, and made no reply, but remained sitting where I was, elbows on my knees, and head between my hands. I was trying to puzzle out *how* we had missed them.

"And they were not over fifty yards," said Hardeman, his voice taking on a discouraged tone of conviction. "Not an inch over fifty yards, and we missed them, we — missed — them." He fell to musing again.

We had forgotten the existence of our guide until now, but we were made aware of it by hearing a subdued chuckling as he appeared from behind the rock where we had left him. His chuckling was not well-timed, and I reached for my rifle.

Hardeman saw the movement, and said, in a weary tone, "No use; you couldn't hit him."

"But *you* could," I rejoined politely.

As we sat there in silence, ever wondering how we could have missed those sheep, and now and then casting our eyes along the rock, where it seemed one or two *must* be lying, a marmot came out of his hole near by. Running down the slope a distance, he sat up and whistled at us in an impudent manner.

"How far?" said Hardeman, cocking his piece.

"Fully a hundred yards."

He fired; and the little animal, minus his head, rolled down the shale.

"And we missed a *sheep* at half that distance," mused Hardeman.

Our return to camp was an unhappy one. The gentlemen left there the day before, having had excellent luck in their piscatorial chase, were in good humor on our arrival, and greeted us with many expectant salutations, which, it seemed to me, were unnecessary, and would have been appropriate and funny in *Life's* "Useless Questions." But we were in an humble frame of mind, and did not resent their interrogations.

"Oh, yes" (smilingly); "we were back."

"No; we had no sheep."

"Any shots? Well, yes; we had gotten a shot at some."

"Yes," yelled Hardeman, jumping up and wildly gesticulating, "yes; we *did* get some shots, and we missed 'em, and they weren't fifty yards away, and there wasn't any excuse — and we are a couple of chumps, that's what *we* are."

After this frank statement of the facts, there was nothing more to be said; and we were soon packed up, and picking our way back toward our permanent camp.

The next day found everybody out of camp but Hardeman and myself. We had not had much to say, both of us thinking the same thing, both afraid to utter our thought.

Finally I could stand it no longer.

Hardeman was sitting in the tent driving some hob-nails in the soles of his shoes. I was standing in the doorway, my eyes fastened on Kootenai, in misty view from here.

"I wonder if they will return," I said, musing to myself.

"Eh," said Hardeman, in a suspiciously eager tone.

"I say," said I, "that they will undoubtedly come back to the same place. We did not have a fair show yesterday," I continued tentatively.

"Yes; we *were* taken unawares."

I looked over my shoulder at him, and caught his eye.

"All right," he answered; and in a few moments we were retracing our trail of yesterday, some bacon and coffee in our saddle-bag pockets, and two men following to take care of us.

We were going to try them once more.

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Three hours later two figures might have been seen toiling up the steep side of Kootenai Mountain. They were on the side of a deep ravine, going slowly, and, in spite of the loose rock, going noislessly. Far above them, near the head of the ravine and on one side, stood a clump of fir-brush. A half-hour later they had gained this shelter, and were lying side by side, softly panting from their exertions. Shortly one of them, leaving his carbine, cautiously crawled to the edge of a ridge separating the ravine up which they had been creeping from another and deeper one

to the right. Slowly his head was raised until the eyes looked over the ridge. Slowly the head was lowered again, and slowly did the body wriggle back to the side of its companion. Turning his head, the other caught the look in his eyes, and his lips formed the unspoken words, "How many?" Eight raised fingers gave definite reply.

Together they now made their way upward, and in a moment were lying prone just below the line of the ridge, their eyes drinking in the sight of a bunch of eight Rocky Mountain sheep not a hundred yards distant, quietly licking the outcropping salt from the earth.

"Well, we've got them," whispered Hardeman, as he quietly took from his belt a half-dozen cartridges, and spread them out for quick use on the ground by his side.

"We have," I nodded, adjusting the sight of my carbine for a "half-point" windage to the left.

Two gleaming barrels were slowly thrust over the edge, and all was silent. One, two, three seconds — then two reports that sounded as one.

Six animals fleeing in six different directions. Three more reports in quick

succession, and the number of fugitives lessened by one.

Again four shots rang out — those two figures seem to think they are skirmishing at the Department Rifle Competition.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

"That last one dropped at two hundred and fifty at least," said Hardeman coolly, as the last of the animals remaining unhit disappeared behind the rocks.

"That last one" proved to have five bullets in him.

"Well," said I, as a half-hour later we were sitting on the carcass of one of our sheep which had slipped off my shoulder while we were carrying it together, and had sent Hardeman rolling down the shaly slope, "well, let's recapitulate. This is our fifth day out, and the score stands as follows: —

"Sheep seen, eight. Cartridges fired, twelve. Hits: on the stand, two; on the run, six. Misses: on the stand, none; on the run, four. Killed: on the stand, two; on the run, two. We have retrieved ourselves, my friend, and may hold up our heads again."

"And we missed those things yesterday at fifty yards," mused Hardeman.

HUNTING MUSK-OX WITH THE DOG RIBS

By Frank Russell



Herd of Musk-Ox.



ON the seventh of July, 1893, I landed at Fort Rae, an isolated and insignificant station kept by a chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company. Rae lies sixty miles north of the main body of the Great Slave Lake, and about nine hundred miles north of the last railway point. The main object of my journey to the Far North was to obtain musk-ox for museum specimens. I had chosen Rae as my headquarters; as it is the nearest post to the Barren Ground, which occupies the northeastern portion of the continent beyond a line drawn

from the mouth of the Churchill River to the mouth of the Mackenzie. The musk-ox are now hunted by the Eskimo from Hudson's Bay and the shores of Coronation Gulf, and by the Indians from Fort Good Hope to the eastern end of the Great Slave Lake. They were found ten years ago at the edge of the timber; but they have been hunted during the last few years for their robes, until they have been driven back from one to two hundred miles beyond the limit of forest growth. I expected to engage Indians to accompany me into the Barren Ground during the months of October and November. I secured the services of a young Indian at the fort, who I soon found would not be of any use as "either man or boy;" and as there were no others available as interpreters, I was of necessity interpreter, official head, dog-driver, hunter, artist, naturalist, and cook of the expedition, though the duties of the last functionary never became very onerous.

Difficulties soon arose to prevent the accomplishment of my plans. The Indians decided to abandon the fall hunt altogether; as the days are short, and severe storms prevail at that season, making the trip into the Barren Ground extremely

dangerous. Four years ago a man was lost and never seen again, and each year one or more hunters are stricken with paralysis resulting from the hardship and exposure.

There was no alternative but to wait until spring, when the longer days and milder weather would permit us to travel.

Another, quite unexpected, obstacle was the superstition of the Indians, which manifested itself when I attempted to make a summer trip into the Barren Ground. They firmly believed that the animals which I sent down to be mounted would live forever, and would be in such a happy state that they would induce all the vast herds of musk-ox and reindeer of the Barrens to migrate, and join them in the mysterious "Mollah Endah," or white man's country.

Although they looked upon any white man not connected with the Company as lawful prey, who was to pay exorbitant prices for their services because "you are rich and we are poor," their superstition was stronger than their cupidity. On the fourth of March I told a party of four, who had come to the fort for ammunition for the hunt, that I was going with them whether they wanted me to do so or not.

With the aid of the fort interpreter we discussed the matter until midnight. Johnnie Cohoyla, a petty chief, was leader of the party. He finally consented to "look after me," which meant to look at me doing my own work, and to cook for me — if I purchased meat for him and his family, which became surprisingly large in a short time. In return I agreed to pay two "skins," or one dollar a day, and supply tea for our party during the trip.

We started late on the 5th for the Indian camps at the edge of the timber. I was not in a cheerful mood as I hitched in my dogs for the long journey, which the Dog Ribs emphatically declared would kill me, as they, accustomed to such a life, "found it hard." I would have to walk or run on snow-shoes the entire distance, and not lie in a portable bed or cariole, as do most travellers in the interior of the Far North, while some native driver attends to the team. I would not hear an English word for two months, and the antagonism of the unwilling Indians must prove a source of constant annoyance.

My outfit consisted of a 45–90 Winchester and ammunition, fifteen pounds of dried caribou meat, eighteen pounds of frozen bread, several pounds of tea, and a

few ounces of salt. My bedding consisted of a single four-point blanket sewed to a light deerskin robe.

Johnnie tried to "plant" me on the hundred and fifty mile trip to the camps. He would have walked that distance in two



Map of the Country Traversed, showing the Author's Route from Fort Rae.

days, but his dogs were not equal to the task; and though they were beaten until their heads were bruised and bleeding, they could not reach our destination in less than three days. My ankles troubled me with the torturing *mal de raquette*, which made

me very glad to see the dirty, smoke-begrimed lodges with their swarm of dogs and half-naked children. The whole camp was soon wrangling over my last pinch of salt. I was dependent upon my rifle or the Indians for meat, which with tea made up the bill of fare for the next two months.

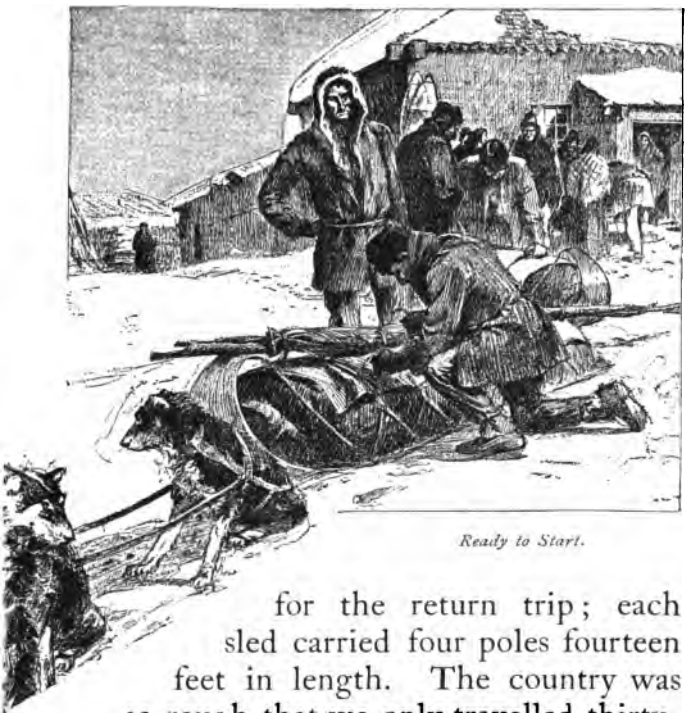
The Dog Ribs were not ready for the great Etjerrer-kah,—musk-ox hunt. They must first make new snow-shoes, sled-lines, and moccasins; caribou must be killed, and pounded meat and grease prepared. We moved our camp twice during the next three weeks, which interrupted the dreary, monotonous rubdub of the Dog Rib drums, to the beating of which the beggars sat and gambled from early morning until midnight.

On the evening of the 28th my dogs were not to be found at feeding-time: "Te-kah ils mangeaient vos chiens as'soir," said Johnnie. "Yazzy tekah thlohn," said the others. "The wolves will eat your dogs to-night."

"Yes; the wolves are very numerous." Without the dogs I could do nothing; missing this opportunity I must remain another year in the country, or go back to Iowa without these, the most difficult to obtain of American mammals. After a

long search the next morning, I found two of them feeding upon the remains of a caribou six miles from camp; and by 3 P.M., just as I was concluding arrangements to buy two miserable little giddies, the other two dogs made their appearance. I felt that a year of my life had been restored!

An hour later we started on the grand hunt, in which only the best men engaged, the women and children, of course, remaining at the camps in the woods. There were eleven Indians in the party, with two lodges, — Johnnie in charge of mine, with three other Indians. On the second day we traversed a long, narrow lake called Tenendeatity. Early in the afternoon, from the summit of a lofty granite hill, I beheld the *Barren Ground* for the first time. Behind us lay the rugged hills, their slopes clothed with stunted pines, upon which a bright sun was shining. Before us were hills still more precipitous and barren, everywhere strewn with angular blocks of granite — a monotonous, dreary waste, from which a snow-storm was swiftly approaching. Half-acre patches of pines from one to three feet high still appeared for a few miles, but our lodge-poles were cut that day; these were trimmed down so slender that they would afford little fuel



Ready to Start.

for the return trip; each sled carried four poles fourteen feet in length. The country was so rough that we only travelled thirty-five miles.

On the fourth day we encamped in a little clump of pines on the Coppermine River. The Dog Ribs called this stream *Tson Ta*. It takes its rise in a large lake called Ek-ah Ta, which is two days' journey in length. This was the last outlier of the timbered country, and henceforth fuel had to be carried on our sleds. The largest of the trees reached a height of

twenty-five feet, with thick, twisted, and much-branched trunks. We left the Coppermine with our sleds loaded, as heavily as the dogs could haul, with wood, cut and split into billets of convenient size. What a luxury a good oil-stove would have been! As we were about to start, "Jimmy the Chief," who was leader of the band, and by far the most intelligent man among them, after a long look eastward, turned to me and said, "A-ye tetchiu touty, nitzy nitchah, yazzy edsah." "This is the woodless country where the blizzards blow, and it is always cold." Then drawing his old gray blanket closer about his shoulders, and grasping his double-barrelled smooth-bore, he set off at a rapid pace, the seven trains falling into line upon the track of his snow-shoes.

We followed the course of a small stream called Kwe-lond Ta for about forty miles, until we reached a lake at least thirty miles in length, called Yambahty.

On the seventh day I killed a male caribou, four or five years old, still bearing his antlers, though we are told that the bucks shed them early in December. Half the caribou still carried their antlers.

As we advanced that day the hills became more rolling, with gravel and peb-

bles, but fewer bowlders. Wherever the wind had swept the surface clear of snow, the reindeer moss (Cladonia rangiferina) and tufts of low grass appeared. Toward evening we passed a few old musk-ox tracks.

On the ninth day we traversed the largest lake seen north of the Great Slave Lake, which I think must have been the Cogead Lake of Hearne, and called by my companions Coahcachity. Away toward the northern end of the lake four or five peaks were visible. Two of these were lofty cones, standing pure white in their snow-mantles, identical in size and shape, with almost perpendicular sides.

We crossed two gravel ridges trending southeast and northwest, and again encountered the hills of naked granite strewn with great angular bowlders, which necessitated constant watchfulness to prevent our sleds from being broken.

These vehicles were the common birch flat sleds of the North, fifteen inches in width, and seven feet in length. They soon became grooved from end to end by the sharp points of rocks lying just below the surface of the snow, which ploughed across the bottom, ordinarily as smooth as glass, and made them much harder for

the dogs to haul. Still Jimmy's old gray blanket led the way straight over the hills, never swerving from a northeast course. Sometimes we would ascend for an hour, and then go pell-mell down a steep incline for two or three hundred feet, holding back our sleds with all our strength, yet landing in the drifts at the bottom, with the sled-dog dragging under, and the rest of the team tangled in the harness.

The reindeer were now quite abundant, and we had little difficulty in killing enough for men and teams. My dogs were keen hunters, and were always ready to dash after the herds of gray-hued caribou, which swept over the snowy slopes like the shadows of swift-flying clouds. The only way that I could restrain them was to overturn the sled. In the evening, when they were released from the harness, they would pursue any caribou which might appear near our camp, which caused me considerable anxiety, as the dismal howl of the never-distant wolves gave warning of their certain fate if they left the camp. One of the giddies was lost in this way.

On the tenth day Johnnie, with three other Indians and myself, separated from the others, and turned a little more to the

northward. We were now in what the Dog Ribs designated the Musk-ox Mountains. After running about ten miles, Esyuh, who was in advance, suddenly turned, and began to make frantic gestures. Over the hills, a mile away, appeared a black object, closely followed by another and another. No need for him to urge us to hasten forward, or to tell us what those huge rolling balls were. "Etjerrer! Tahy etjerrer!" Three musk-ox; and a few seconds later the dogs were all released and scattering out over the country, some in pursuit, some on the back track, and others trotting complacently along at their masters' heels. We followed as fast as we could run. Then it was that I discovered the advantage of having light clothing, light guns and ammunition. I was distanced by my companions, who killed the musk-ox after a run of three miles. As soon as the dogs reached them they turned to defend themselves, and fell an easy prey to the hunters, who were soon upon them. Our lodge was set up that night beside the fallen carcasses, and our teams for once had all they could eat. There were several hundred pounds of meat with fat two inches in thickness on the backs. Meat of excellent quality,



A Giddie.

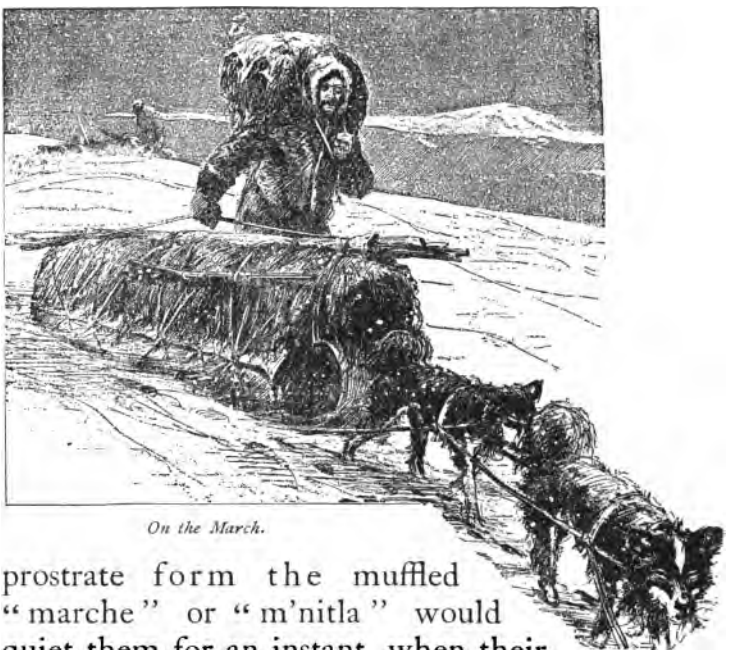
without the faintest trace of musk perceptible. That from one of the animals was tender, and as well flavored as any venison that I ever ate. The others were tough; but the Dog Ribs preferred tough meat to walking a dozen yards to get that of a younger animal. The complexion of our diet was now changed: before, we had enjoyed caribou ribs boiled, garnished with handfuls of coarse gray hairs; now we had boiled ribs of musk-ox with hairs of a brownish black.

I awakened next morning with a sense of weight upon my blanket; and my ears were greeted with a rushing roar caused by a northeast gale, which had covered everything inside our lodge, to a depth of a foot or more, with fine, flour-like snow. The temperature was at least thirty degrees below zero. It was impossible to face such a blizzard without freezing in a few minutes. All landmarks were obscured so that we could not continue upon

our course. As we had only wood enough for the time that we expected to be engaged in actual travel, we could have no fire on days like this, when we were compelled to "lay to." We remained in our blankets until midday, when a kettle of meat was (half) boiled, and we turned in again. In the evening a fire about the size of a cigar-box was kept up long enough to boil a kettle of tea, one cup for each man—we always wanted four! No meat was cooked; for our appetites were soon satisfied with the large sticks of white frozen marrow from the long bones of the musk-ox.

Throughout the following day the storm continued with increased severity, and we were forced to lie in the snow another twenty-four hours.

My dogs never came inside the lodge at night, but coiled themselves up in the lee of the lodge, where the snow soon drifted over them, giving warmth and shelter. The twelve Indian giddies came inside as soon as the last man rolled up in his blanket at night. At first they spent a few minutes fighting over the bones about the fireplace, then they rummaged through everything that was not firmly lashed down. As a dog walked over a



On the March.

prostrate form the muffled "marche" or "m'nitla" would quiet them for an instant, when their snarling and snapping would break out anew, until some of us would pick up a billet of wood and "pacify them." After we had once fallen into the sleep of exhaustion we were seldom awakened by their fighting over us. In the morning I would find two or three giddies coiled up in the snow upon my blanket; the heat of their bodies melted the snow, which froze as soon as they left it, and made my scanty bedding hard and stiff.

After sixty hours of such resting we

were quite ready to move on, as the thirteenth day dawned bright and clear. Early in the day we caught sight of a band of forty musk-ox already in flight a couple of miles distant. We chased them six miles, but only one of our party reached them, Wisho, who killed four. We were very much fatigued from our long run, and covered with perspiration, which froze on our outer garments as we walked back with the dogs to bring up the sleds. It was after nightfall before we set up the lodge, and cold, tired, and hungry, sat shivering around a column of smoke over which hung a kettle containing both meat and drink; for our supply of tea was exhausted, and we had to quench our thirst with the greasy bouillon, or "tewoh," in which the meat was boiled.

The temperature was falling rapidly, giving us some concern about Johnnie Cohoyla, who had not returned. The next morning I was awakened by the monotonous wailing of his brother, Esyuh, who was chanting the virtues of the lost reprobate, and entreating the fates in general, and the North Wind in particular, to spare him.

Tunna hoola (a man is lost).

The Dog Ribs repeated the phrase with

significant glances at me, as if this "Wohkahwe" accompanying them had offended the Great Spirit, so that he had wreaked his vengeance upon the man who had allowed me to enter the Dog Rib hunting-ground. A terrific gale with a temperature of thirty degrees below zero prevented us from searching for the lost man; we could only spend the day in our blankets, while the snow drifted in and over all.

That was one of the most miserable days I ever spent. I had tried twice to run with the Indians, and failed to reach the musk-ox; and there seemed to be no immediate prospect of my getting any. The musk-ox were not numerous, they said, and our wood might fail before we secured any more. Johnnie must have perished, as no human being could live through a night of such storm without protection, and it was thirty-six hours before we could search for him. We were shivering in our blankets, even the Indians saying, "Edsah, yazzy edsah" — (it is cold, very cold).

The next morning proved to be calm, and we set off in search of Johnnie. I had as great difficulty to keep my cheeks from freezing as at any time during the winter, though there was scarcely any wind blowing.

After running about ten miles I was recalled by the signalling of another searcher. Johnnie had been found by his brother, safely and snugly rolled up in a couple of musk-ox skins which he had secured, where he had been warmer than if in the lodge; and with plenty of frozen marrow to eat he had been quite comfortable.

On the sixteenth day we continued the journey northward. With the field-glass I discovered a band of fourteen musk-ox on the summit of a high hill, so far away that it was impossible to distinguish them from the surrounding bowlders with the unaided eye. In a couple of hours we were within half a mile of them, and released the dogs, which soon disappeared over an intervening ridge. My companions had concluded, from the way that I had run, or failed to run, on the two previous occasions, that I could not run very far, and that their best plan to keep me from bringing a magazine-gun into competition with their muzzle-loaders, was to give the musk-ox time to get far enough away so that they could plant me in the race. I had prepared for this occasion by taking off some of my clothing, and only carrying the ammunition actually required; so that when they did begin to run at a

swift pace my snow-shoes clanked close beside them.

We soon came upon eleven of the musk-ox standing at bay in two little clusters, hardly lowering their heads at the dogs, whose ardor had been cooled by the statue-like immobility of the noble animals. Their robes were in prime condition; the long hair and heavy, erect mane gave them an imposing appearance. To kill them was simple butchery; yet I had no choice but to fire as rapidly as possible and get my share of them, as they were all doomed anyway.



The Author.

On leaving Fort Rae, Johnnie had agreed to assist me in skinning the game killed; he now

found that his own affairs would require all his attention. Esyuh helped me to skin two, while I finished the third by moonlight, freezing my fingers in the operation. He afterward demanded seventy skins — thirty-five dollars — for his labor.

It was impossible to skin the heads in the darkness. I wrapped the skins around them so that they would not freeze during the night.

Another blizzard was raging in the morning, which prevented moving, but enabled me to attend to the heads, which had not frozen very much; but the skins around them were stiff and solid, so that it was impossible to fold them up for transportation.

I spent the day sawing the skulls in halves, so that they might be loaded on the sled, sitting beside a little smoke arising from the bones of the musk-ox, which contained enough grease to burn, though not very readily. Our fires were started with birch-bark, a small roll being carried by each man for that purpose. The pine-wood was cut in sticks a foot in length, and finely split, then built up in a "log cabin" or a cone. Each man took his turn blowing to keep it alight, as the

wood was not dry, and the quantity so small that it required constant attention.

We were destined to spend the next day in the blankets, with the clouds of powdery snow settling down through the smoke-hole of our lodge upon us. We had had but two meals a day since leaving the Coppermine, and when lying storm-bound we ate but one. When travelling, although we were voraciously hungry before nightfall, it was thirst which troubled us the most, as we were running most of the time.

Early on the nineteenth day we sighted musk-ox while yet a long distance from them. While ascending a steep hill I was delayed by my sled sinking in the soft snow until the great awkward balls into which the skins were frozen, projecting at the sides, made the load drag heavily. When I reached the top the others were a quarter of a mile in advance, and instead of waiting for me to come up, they had released their dogs, and were likely to kill every musk-ox before I could reach them. Johnnie, remembering the havoc which my Winchester was liable to make in his fur returns, thought best to "suspend the rules" of the hunting-code, and let me buy of them if I wanted any musk-ox.

Without releasing my dogs, which were wildly tugging at their collars, I started forward with little hopes of killing any musk-ox, but in excellent humor for slaughtering a few Dog Ribs. Fortune, however, smiled upon me. Four bulls of the largest size broke away together without a dog in pursuit, and came within range. This was not so much like butchering them; they were running much faster than I could on snow-shoes, and had a chance for their lives. I killed two as they passed me about a hundred yards distant, and wounded the others so that they were bagged after a run of half a mile. I had now killed seven musk-ox, and had as many on my sled as the Hudson's Bay people had told me it was possible to haul. When Johnnie returned from chasing the scattered herd, I stated my plain and unbiassed opinion of him in all the Red River French and Dog Rib that I could command. His deprecatory "Yazzy" changed to a sheepish "Nazee" (good) when I informed him that I had secured all the robes that I wanted. He refused to carry a skeleton for me at any price; not even a head or half a split skull would he carry, though I gave him two robes for carrying back the lodge.

The next day was spent in camp; the others were engaged in skinning the animals killed, and in boiling bones for grease to eat on the return trip. I thus had an opportunity to prepare the two skulls for transportation.

On the twenty-first day of the hunt we started homeward — the turning-point of the expedition. We were all heavily loaded with the loose bulky skins. The sleds were frequently overturned, and if our dogs had not been in unusually good condition, would never have been brought out at all. My load extended over both ends of the sled, and was nearly as high as my shoulders, with the four lodge-poles on top, making it no easy matter to keep everything lashed firmly.

On the twenty-third day a blinding snow-storm prevented moving before midday, when we pushed on through the soft snow, without meat for ourselves or the dogs. On the return trip we only secured five caribou, which was less than half rations for five men and sixteen dogs.

We were now burning our lodge-poles for fuel. On the night of the twenty-fifth day the lodge was set up for the last time, with two poles only, and with our sled lines made fast to the circle of sleds, which



A Running Shot.

were always enclosed, gave sufficient support. We started at 6 A.M., determined to reach the Coppermine, some fifty miles distant, before camping. In the afternoon we came upon a lodge-pole, standing beside a sled-track which we had followed all day, upon which a line written in the syllabic characters informed us that Jimmy's party was to reach the woods that evening also.

At half-past ten, after sixteen and a half hours of continuous travelling, we reached the little grove of pines, which seemed more welcome than any harbor to the

storm-tossed sailor. We were all too much fatigued to cut much brush, and fell asleep in a little hole scooped in the snow, before a few logs which made such an uncomfortably hot fire that we did not enjoy it as we had anticipated. But we would no longer have to sleep upon snow or flat rocks; we would not have to sleep with our moccasins and frozen blanket footings next our bodies to dry them, and at noonday we could have *tewoh* to quench our thirst.

After five hours' rest we were awakened by Jimmy, who reminded us that there was nothing to eat, and that we must push rapidly on. My load weighed over five hundred pounds, and the dogs were getting pitifully weak. I pushed on the sled, and carried a load on my back to assist them. We were three days in reaching the camps. We only rested five hours at night, and then hurried on again, as the teams were failing rapidly for want of food. On the twenty-eighth day the first signs of a thaw appeared; the snow softened just enough to cause it to stick to our snow-shoes, so that it made them heavy to carry, and, worse still, lumps of ice would accumulate every few minutes which soon blistered the bottoms of our feet over the entire surface.

On the last two days before reaching the camps the heavy snow-shoes caused the *mal de raquette* to reappear, which made it simply torture to move; yet we were now in the woods, where the soft snow required heavier work in the management of the sleds.

At two in the afternoon of the twenty-ninth day we reached the vicinity of the camping-place from which we had started, and fired several rounds to announce our arrival. A few minutes later we dashed into—a deserted camp. The lodges were gone, the snow had drifted over their sites. Their skeleton poles offered a dreary welcome to us, as, tired, hungry, and disappointed, we turned away in no pleasant humor to follow the track along which a line of slanting poles indicated the direction of departure. We were upon an old, hard track from which the sled frequently overturned into the soft snow on either side, and my dogs were about giving up altogether. A great deal more powder was burned as we approached the camps three hours later. As I passed one of the first lodges, my sled swayed off the track, and caught against a tree, much to the amusement of a couple of young women, who, after watching my attempts to right

it, remarked, "Yazzy Wahkahwee natsuthly" (the white man is weak, indeed). One of them grasped the sled-line to show me how to straighten up a load, and tugged and hauled and tugged again without producing the slightest effect. I am afraid that I laughed very ungallantly as the discomfited maiden fled to the shelter of the lodge. Mrs. Jimmy came to me with a very cordial greeting, exclaiming, "Merci, Merci — Cho. Nazee etjerrerkah" — ("Thanks, big thanks, for the good musk-ox hunt"); evidently ascribing our success, in a measure, to my presence.

It was nearly midnight on the fourth of May when my weary dogs crept over the hill into Fort Rae, and halted at the door they had left two months before. The long march of eight hundred miles was over; but the goggles and snow-shoes, the whip and harness, were not suffered to be long laid aside, for five days later I had started on the far longer journey down the Mackenzie.

SEP 17 1898
OCT 10 1898
OCT 17 1898
OCT 31 1898
NOV 11 1898
DEC 8 1898
DEC 24 1898
JAN 11 1899
JAN 28 1899
MAR 9 1899
MAR 24 1899
MAY 8 1899
MAR 16 1901
OCT 6 1902
DUE DEC 4 1924